DESIRE, BEATITUDE, AND THE BASIS OF MORALITY IN THOMAS AQUINAS

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For My Parents

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PREFACE

A few words of clarification on the scope and character of this dissertation may be helpful to readers. This dissertation was originally intended to present and criticize the views of Thomas Aquinas on the cognitive status of moral judgments. But, it became apparent that before such a study of Thomas's metaethical views could be undertaken, it was necessary to achieve some clarity on the fundamental shape of his normative ethics and his moral psychology. Accordingly, the main task of this dissertation has been the presentation of Thomas's theory of human appetites and desires in a way which would indicate the place of morality within his general account of human action and ~~which would be accessible to~~ contemporary moral philosophers. In the last chapter, I have ventured to make a number of proposals for interpreting Thomas's normative ethics and his metaethical position, but obviously a great deal more remains to be done.

In the present work I have concentrated on the Second Part of the Summa Theologiae, because this is Thomas's last and most extended presentation of his general moral theory. It comprises 303 questions grouped into two parts dealing with both general moral theory and a wide range of specific moral topics and was written between 1269 and 1272, near the end of Thomas's life. At certain key points in the argument where the Summa Theologiae has been left incomplete, I have also drawn on the earlier Summa Contra Gentiles, written around 1262.

I have worked primarily with Thomas's own text in order to bring out the structure of his views and the tensions within his system. I have also introduced a number of comparisons to Aristotle and to moral philosophers in the British tradition, in order to situate Thomas's views within the wider history of moral philosophy.

I have, however, made little use of the voluminous secondary literature on Aquinas. Much of this is merely repetitive and defensive; much of it is influenced by such disparate philosophical thinkers as Wolff, Kant, Hegel, Bergson, Husserl and Sartre. Such materials, while not without philosophical interest of their own, would, in my judgment, introduce further level of complexity to the task of clarifying the logic of Thomas's own views, which is the central objective of this dissertation.

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CHAPTER I

GOOD, APPETITE, AND WILL

Good and Appetite

The course of moral philosophy since G. E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* has accustomed contemporary moral philosophers to begin examination of ethical theories with the question of what, if any, definitions the ethical theorist proposes for the basic terms of his theory. Now the most basic term in Thomas's account of human activity and the moral life is quite clearly the notion of *bonum* or good. This, for him as for us, is the most general evaluative term, though, as we shall see, it is closely linked to his metaphysics and his natural theology. Thomas discusses this term, not as part of his treatment of human purpose and activity in the Second Part of the *Summa Theologiae*, but rather in the treatise on God and his perfections in the First Part. There Thomas states that "the goodness of a thing consists in its being desirable." (*Ratio enim boni consistit in hoc quod sit appetibile.*) (*S.T.* I, 5, 1c)[1] He then appeals to Aristotle's dictum that "good is what all things desire."[2] He further observes in this same article that "the word 'good' expresses a notion of desirability (*rationem appetibilis*) not expressed by the word 'existent'." So it seems that Thomas proposes to define "good" in terms of appetite or desire. But, before we could conclude from this that Thomas is an ethical naturalist, we would have to show that the notions operative in Thomas's strictly ethical the-

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ory (as contrasted with his general account of activity and the practical life) are indeed dependent on this explication of "good" in terms of desire and that what Thomas proposes here is itself properly a definition. The first of these problems will be postponed to the final chapter on Thomas's theory of morality. We should remember, however, that we are dealing here with a notion that is, as D. J. O'Connor points out, "not merely a moral concept," but one that is, along with the notion of evil, "analysed and fixed in metaphysics before . . . [it is] applied in morals."[3] The second problem will be dealt with in the course of this chapter. But we should be aware that Thomas himself does not regard what he says in this explication of the term "good" as a strict definition, since, for him as for Aristotle, "nothing is properly defined except a species, since every definition consists of genera and specific difference."[4] Now "good " is a term that applies to all genera and species and does not designate any one species of things. So what Thomas gives us here can only be regarded within his own system as a quasi-definition.[5] The question whether we would be justified in treating Thomas's account of the notion of good as providing a definition will have to be worked out in the course of this chapter. But first we will have to examine Thomas's theory of inclination, appetite, desire, and will in order to understand what is involved in his account of good in terms of desire and appetite and to see the place that he assigns to human activity in his general picture of the universe.

For Thomas, all beings have a natural tendency to good, which is both the goal of their activity and the object of their inclination or appetite. An important text which sets forth the order and variety of ways in which things exhibit this natural tendency is found in Thomas's discussion of the will of angels:

> . . . For all things emanate from the divine will, and consequently each and every thing has its own distinctive appetite for goodness. But some things move toward goodness without awareness of it, tending to the good simply because of the relation to it that is in their nature. Such are plants and inanimate bodies: whose tending to goodness is called natural appetition. Other things move toward the good with some degree of knowledge, but with no idea of goodness as such; they know it only in the particular instance, in a sensation of what is sweet, or white, or the like; and the tendency that goes with knowledge of this sort is called sense appetition. Finally there are beings that tend to the good and at the same time know it precisely as good; and this kind of knowing is distinctively intelligent. And the beings that have it are those that move to goodness in the best possible way; as not merely directed towards it, as by some extrinsic power, like the things devoid of knowledge; nor as merely tending to this or that good in particular, like things whose knowledge is limited to sensation; but they tend towards goodness itself, taken quite generally (*universale bonum*). And this tendency is called will. And since the angels are intellectual and know goodness in general, it is clear that they are endowed with will(*S.T.* I, 59, lc).

What this text presents is a hierarchy of appetites or inclinations, which Thomas classifies as natural, sensitive, and intellectual or rational; the last of these is identical with will. Thomas makes no significant distinction between appetite and inclination either here or elsewhere in the *Summa*. In fact, he says that "appetition (*appetitus*) is nothing other than a certain bent (*inclinatio appetentis*) towards a thing that is wanted" (*S.T.* I-II, 8, lc). Appetite or inclination is, as we can see from the previous text, found in all things and is not confined to sentient or intelligent beings. The notion of appetite forms an integral part of Thomas's scheme of teleo-

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logical explanation for the activities of beings in the world; and it is used to account both for the movement of things and for their rest.

> . . . A physical thing has its actual existence through its form of existence, and likewise a mind is actually understanding through having an intelligible form. Now the bearing of a thing to a form natural to it is this: that when not possessed it tends there and and when possessed it stays. Such is the case with any natural completion that is a good for the nature in question. When cognition is absent this bearing on good is called 'natural appetite.' A thing of intelligence has a like attitude towards a good apprehended through an intelligible form so that it makes for that good when it is still to be gained, and rests with it when it is gained: both are functions of willing. Accordingly anything with a mind has a will, just as a thing with sensation has emotional appetite (S.T. I, 19, 1c).

As this passage makes clear, appetite or inclination as such is not, for Thomas, a psychological faculty or act (since it is found in beings that lack souls and so all psychological faculties); but it is, rather, a relation or attitude (*habitudo*) that a thing has to those things that complete it and so are good for it and that is introduced in order to account for the thing's motion or rest with regard to these things. Because he conceives of appetite in this minimal fashion, Thomas is able to ascribe it to all things without adopting panpsychism and without falling into overt anthropomorphism in his account of the material world. This conception of appetite as a being's attitude or relation to the goods appropriate to it should be kept in mind in any consideration of Thomas's account of the will for two reasons: first, it will prevent undue psychologizing of his account of the structure of voluntary human acts, and, second, it serves as a defense against Humean and Rylean attacks on the notion of will which suppose that the notion of will presupposes and is based on discrete

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psychological occurrences identifiable as volitions.

Natural Appetite

Appetite, then, for Thomas, is found on all levels of being: as natural appetite in inanimate or natural things; as sense appetite in animals, both rational and irrational; and as will in human beings, angels, and God. As we have already seen, a thing has a natural appetite or inclination without knowledge (S.T. I, 19, 1c: I, 59, 1c). Natural appetite involves desire of an end and activity toward that end without knowledge of it: "Some acts issue from natural appetite, others from animal or intellective appetite, for every agent in some way desires an end. Now natural appetition does not result from sense cognition, as does animal appetition, and also intellectual appetition" (S.T. I-II, 17, 8c).[6] Since Thomas does not wish to maintain that purposes or ends can be aimed at in activity without minds to have such purposes or ends, he holds that in the case of natural agents the cognition necessary to the pursuit of an end must come from outside; natural agents are "merely directed towards it, as by some extrinsic power, like the things devoid of knowledge" (S.T. I, 59, 1c). In commenting on Aristotle's dictum that "good is what all desire," Thomas maintains that the dictum:

> . . . is to be understood not only of those who knowingly seek good but also of beings lacking knowledge. These things by a natural desire tend to good, not as knowing the good but because they are moved to it by something cognitive, that is, under the direction of the divine intellect in the way an arrow speeds toward a target by the aim of the archer. This very tendency to good is the desiring of good.[7]

Thomas regards the tendency of natural objects to good and their end-directed activity as guided by the intelligence of God. Thomas's Fifth Way of arguing for the existence of God (*S.T.* I, 2, 3c), which is based "on the guidedness of nature" and which claims that nothing "that lacks awareness tends to a goal, except under the direction of someone with awareness and with understanding," is presupposed in what he says here about the way in which natural objects tend to good. Thomas's point in the Fifth Way is not to attribute conscious purposes to inanimate natural objects, but to show that there must be a superior intelligence directing such objects to the goods or ends they tend to. Anthony Kenny's comment on Thomas's conception of teleology is instructive in this regard:

> . . . We must notice first that when Aquinas attributes ends or aims (*intentiones*) to inanimate objects he is not being crudely anthropomorphic. He is not attributing to stocks and stones ghostly half-conscious purposes. He insists, and indeed makes it a major step in his argument, that inanimate objects have no consciousness (*cognitio*) and if he speaks of their natural desires, he means simply, what he more often says, their natural tendencies (*appetitus*).[8]

Natural appetite, then, for Thomas, is an inclination "springing from an internal principle . . . without cognition," (*S.T.* I-II, 6, 4c) in such a way that while the cognition necessary to make the thing's activity the pursuit of an end can be external to the thing itself, the inclination is internal to and is really present in the thing or agent in question. To what is such an inclination directed? The most general answer that Thomas gives is that each thing seeks or aims at (*appetit*) its own perfection (*S.T.* I, 26, 2c), or its own good (*S.T.* I, 19, 2c). As we have already seen, each thing stands in an appetitive relation to its form and to every natural perfection appropriate to it (*S.T.* I, 19, 1c). For Thomas, every thing in this world marked by generation and corruption strives to preserve itself in existence: "Everything naturally loves itself, and it is for this reason that everything naturally seeks to keep itself in being and to resist hostile forces" (*S.T.* II-II, 64, 5c). We may look on this as evidence of the fundamentally self-regarding character of natural appetite, as a parallel to and an anticipation of egoism in the will. But Thomas also suggests a parallel to benevolence in the will in the following passage:

> A thing has a natural tendency towards its own good, to obtain it when it has not got it and to rest with it when it has, and also, so far as possible, to spread its own good to others. Thus we observe that at their highest pitch all active things (*omne agens in quantum est actu et perfectum*) reproduce their like (*S.T.* I, 19, 2c).

So, for Thomas, natural appetite involves both self-preserving and self-giving.

Everything that can be said to exist and to have a form or to be a natural agent can be the subject of a natural appetite. Consideration of some of the difficulties presented by this view of Thomas's will be postponed until we consider Thomas's metaphysical thesis that all existing things are as such good. But here we should note that Thomas ascribes natural appetites not merely to things or substances that lack knowledge but also to powers of the soul in intelligent beings: "Each power of the soul is a form with its own nature and its own natural bent (*inclinationem naturalem*), so each by natural appetite (*appetitu*) reaches for the right object" (*S.T.* I, 80, 1 *ad* 3). Thomas's reason for calling the relation between a power and its object a natural appetite is that he believes that this relation is operative in the activity of the power with regard to its objects and that the relation exists prior to any awareness of it or reflection upon it or choice of it by the person whose power it is. Thus the intellect's object is truth; and this is its good (S.T. I-II, 9, 2c),[9] or, as we shall see, an object for its appetite, quite independently of any choices or value judgments that a person may make. So also the will itself has a natural tendency or appetite to the good (S.T. I-II, 10, 1c).

Natural appetite, then, is not confined to natural agents that operate under the domination of another; but it is also included in the more complex constitutions of animals and intelligent beings. The term here again does not refer to a faculty that is manifest in psychological operations, but to a certain kind of relation, namely, an inclination or tendency, that exists between a thing or faculty that is capable of activity and its object. The kinds of natural inclinations that a thing has are determined by the nature of the thing in question. Thus, when Thomas sets out the correspondence that he proposes between natural inclinations and the precepts of the natural law, he distinguishes the natural inclinations that human beings share with all substances (the appetite to preserve its own natural being), those that they share with other animals (the appetite for sexual union), and those that are proper to them alone (the appetites to know the truth about God and to live in society). (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c). Thomas also speaks of a natural inclination in human beings "to act according to reason, that is to say, according to virtue" (S.T. I-II, 94, 3c). So there is no one object or class of objects to which natural appetite is directed; and the notion of natural inclination does not mark out a relation to a certain restricted class of goods. As we shall see, the notion of natural inclination is of central importance for the interpretation we will propose of Thomas's quasi-definition of the good.

Sensitive Appetite

Beyond the realm of natural inclinations, Thomas also discerns two other kinds of appetites which are present in human beings: sensitive or animal appetite, which is also found in non-human animals, and the intellectual or rational appetite, which is also found in angels or immaterial intelligences and in God. Both these kinds of appetite differ from natural appetites in that they are present only in beings that have knowledge and that they are a consequence of the kinds of knowledge that these beings have. Thomas draws the contrast between natural appetites and these kinds of appetite that follow on cognition in the following passage:

> In things without knowledge form fixes each in its own determinate being, in what is natural for it. The propensity accompanying this natural form is called its natural appetite. But things that know are each fixed in their natural being in such a way as to be open to receive forms from other things. Sense receives sense forms, the understanding receives intellectual forms, so that by sense and understanding the soul of man is in a certain manner everything . . . . In things that know, then, forms exist in a manner that transcends the way they exist in nature. And consequently they have a bent (inclinatio) distinct from their natural propensity or appetite. This higher bent comes from the appetitive power of the soul. By this power an animal seeks after what it knows, not merely going where natural inclination leads (S.T. I, 80, 1c).

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Thomas elsewhere speaks of the senses "ushering in" sensitive appetite (*S.T.* I, 81, 1 *ad* 1). The distinction between sensitive appetite and intellectual appetite is based on the difference between the kinds of knowledge that lie behind them. For Thomas, sense knowledge or apprehension is always of the particular, whereas intellectual knowledge is always of the universal. This difference then leads to the distinction of appetites. This general way of drawing the distinction between sensitive appetite and intellectual appetite, common though it is in Thomas's writing, stands in need of some clarification. It should be taken as claiming that sense appetite is always directed immediately to particular goods whereas intellectual appetite is directed to good in general as well as to particular goods; otherwise, Thomas will not be able to say that the will, which is the intellectual appetite, chooses to perform a particular action or to enjoy a particular good. The point that Thomas wants to make here is that it is a limitation of the sense appetite.

> There is a difference between the way reason transcends sensation and intellect transcends reason. The former transcendence entails a difference in the objects known; for sensation bears on particulars but reason on universals. So there must be one appetite that tends to goodness in general and is implied by reason; and another that tends to this or that particular good and is implied by sensation (*S.T.* I, 59, 1 *ad* 1).

On the other hand, the sensitive appetite is not directed to all particular goods, but rather to those that are grasped by the senses, so that Thomas says: "The movement of sensuality is a bent (*inclinatio*) attached to physical sensation, being a desire for what we know by our body-senses" (*S.T.* I, 81, 1 *ad* 1). The object of the sense appetite need not, however, be actually perceived or be physically present for the sense appetite to be inclined to it. "External sensation requires the impact of external sense-objects, and reason cannot supply the presence of these. But the interior powers both of knowledge and desire do not need such stimuli" (*S.T.* I, 81, 3 *ad* 3). For the sense appetite can be moved naturally by imagination as well as by the external senses (*S.T.* I, 81, 3 *ad* 2); imagination, like sensation, is directed to particulars (*S.T.* I-II, 17, 7c).

In animals other than human beings, the relation between sense appetite and external activity is direct (*S.T.* I, 81, 3c); Thomas gives as an example the sheep that fears the wolf and at once flees. There is no process of deliberation and choice in brute animals to complicate matters, no higher appetite that might oppose or modify the sense appetite.

> The impulsion to do something is otherwise in non-rational animals than in men, where it arises through an ordinance of reason, and thus has the character of a command. But in animals it arises through the instinct of nature (*instinctum naturae*), for as soon as they perceive something fitting or unfitting, they are spontaneously (*naturaliter*) moved to pursue or avoid it. They are ordered to action by another, not by themselves. Therefore there is an impulsion in them, but not a command (*S.T.* I-II, 17, 2 *ad* 3).

Here we may notice that Thomas speaks of the activity of sense appetite in ways that draw it close to natural inclination. Though both sense appetite and intellectual appetite are consequences of cognition, it is safe to say that for Thomas the fundamental distinction is between sense appetite and intellectual appetite rather than between sense appetite and natural inclination. Thus we find

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that Thomas denies to animals, which have sense appetites, most of the activities characteristic of the intellectual appetite or will. Thomas denies that brute animals have intentions (S.T. I-II, 12, 5c), make choices (S.T. I-II, 13, 2c) give consent to means (S.T. I-II, 15, 2c), apply their powers to activity (S.T. I-II, 16, 2c), or give commands (S.T. I-II, 17, 2c), though he does allow that brute animals do in some limited sense exhibit voluntary activity (S.T. I-II, 6, 2c) and that they can enjoy their end once it is attained (S.T. I-II, 11, 2c). He does not find these last activities in other non-rational beings because they are completely lacking in the knowledge that is necessary for the performance of voluntary actions. We should not, however, equate the activities of the sense appetite with those of brute animals, since sense appetite is also found in human beings and since natural inclinations are also present in brute animals; but, for Thomas, the activities of brute animals do serve as a guide to the limitations of the sense appetite in comparison with the intellectual or rational appetite, since they possess the one but not the other.

As was already mentioned, the relation between sense appetite and external activity in animals is immediate. Thomas holds that in human beings there is a higher appetite that regulates external activity and that the sense appetite is in principle subject to this higher appetite, the will. But this subjection is only partial, since the activity of the sense appetite, like that of the senses themselves, depends on bodily factors that are not always within our voluntary control:

> The activity of sensitive appetite flows not only from an appetitive force, but also from a bodily disposition. So then there are two sides, the psychic and the somatic. On the first emotion results from perception. Here the imagination, which apprehends the particular, is governed by the reason, which apprehends the universal, as indeed a restricted (*particularis*) power is regulated by a more comprehensive (*universalis*) active power. In this respect, accordingly, an act of emotional appetite (*appetitus sensitivi*) is subject to the command of reason. Not so on the second side. For the quality and disposition of the body may block the movement of emotion from being completely responsive to the command of reason (*S.T.* I-II, 17, 7c)

What Thomas is interested in showing in this passage is not that the activity of the sense appetite is always or even usually under the control of reason and rational appetite, but how it is possible for sense appetite to be subject to rational appetite at all. He attempts to do this, not by arguing from our awareness of certain internal occurrences, but from the general primacy of the universal over the particular. The normative uses that Thomas puts this conclusion to will be considered in the course of our chapter on the choice of evil. Elsewhere Thomas offers a somewhat similar line of argument to show that it is the higher or intellectual appetite that commands, since sense appetite as a secondary mover only moves to activity in virtue of the primary mover, the will. Clearly, the scope of such claims must be restricted to the domain of voluntary activity. The argumentation may seem a priori and questionable to us; but the conclusion reached, when properly understood, contains nothing surprising; for human beings do in fact exercise some measure of control over their sense appetites. Thomas cites with approval Aristotle's remark in the *Politics* to the effect that "the reason governs the appetites of desire and contention, not by the despotic rule of a slavemaster, but by the civil and royal rule which governs free men who are not entirely subject to dictate" (*S.T.* I-II, 17, 7c).[10] For Thomas, while reason and rational appetite are to govern the sense appetites and the emotions, the struggle between reason and the passions is far from being the central theme of his account of human activity or of the moral life, as it sometimes is in those moralists who have been shaped by the Stoic tradition in either its pagan or Christian forms.

According to Thomas, the sense appetite in human beings is actually under a two-fold direction; for, while it is subject to the intellect and the intellectual appetite, it is also guided immediately by a power that Thomas speaks of as the *vis aestimativa* or instinct in animals or as the *vis cogitativa* or cogitative power in human beings (*S.T.* I, 81, 3 *ad* 2). Thomas holds that this power is required in order to account for the activity of the higher animals:

> Consider further that if the only things that moved an animal were things pleasurable and repugnant to the senses, there would be no need to suppose any power in it except the perception of sense forms in which it would either take pleasure or displeasure. But an animal has to seek and shun things not only because they suit or do not suit its senses but also because they are in other ways fitting or useful or harmful. Thus a lamb, when it sees a wolf approach, flees, not because it does not like the colour or shape, but because it is its natural enemy. And likewise a bird collects straw, not because it pleases its senses, but because it needs it for building its nest. So an animal has to perceive things, which no external sense perceives. And there has to be a distinct source of this perception since the perception of sense forms comes from their impact on the senses, but not the perception of the intentions in question here . . . . Instinct (*vis aestimativa*) grasps intentions which are not objects of simple sensation (*S.T.* I, 78, 4c).

It is apparent from this passage and from the similar considerations

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that lead him to divine sensitive appetite into irascible and concupiscible that Thomas recognizes some of the complexity of the activity of the higher animals, even though he denies them any share in reason itself, and that the activity of the sensitive appetite is for him more complex than a simple grasp for the sensible pleasant. In human beings the cognitive activity prior to the activity of sensitive appetite is more complex still in that it involves not merely the grasp of things as harmful or beneficial but also a comparison of things with each other:

> For other animals perceive such intentions solely by natural instinct, whereas man perceives them by a process of comparison. Which is why it is also called the particular reason (*ratio particularis*) to which medical scientists assign a fixed part of the body, the middle of the head; for it compares individual intentions the way the reasoning intellect compares universal intentions (*S.T.* I, 78, 4c).

The special character of the *vis cogitativa* in human beings is a consequence of the influence of reason on this power (*S.T.* I, 78, 4 *ad* 5). The subordination of the *vis cogitativa*, which grasps and compares individual intentions concerning the harmful and the beneficial, to reason, which grasps universal truths, provides Thomas with another line of thought to show how natural reason can command sense appetite, since the *vis cogitativa* itself directs sense appetite.

> In man, as we have said above, the power of cogitation takes the place of instinct (*vis aestimativa*); some call this the particular reason because it relates and groups particular experiences. So man's sense appetite naturally responds to it. But the particular reason in its turn is naturally responsive to the motion and guidance of rational understanding; thus it is that we can logically deduce conclusions regarding individual matters from premises of a general nature. Clearly the abstract reason commands the sensitive appetite, both of desire

and of aggression, and this responds to its initiatives (*S.T.* I, 81, 3c).

The distinction that Thomas makes between concupiscible appetite and irascible appetite has already been mentioned and is present in the passage just cited; it is descended from Plato's distinction between *epithumia* or desire and *thumos* or spirit.[11] In arguing for this distinction, Thomas observes that in natural things natural inclinations include inclinations to resist whatever threatens the thing as well as attractions and aversions: "Observe how in natural mortal things there needs to be not only a bent towards what is beneficial and away from what is harmful, but also a resistance to contrary and destructive forces which block what they need and bring up what menaces them" (*S.T.* I, 82c). In the sense appetite there is a similar range of inclinations: attractions and aversions, which belong to the concupiscible appetite, and the inclination to oppose those things that threaten what is advantageous to the animal and that bring harm to it, which belongs to the irascible appetite. This appetite, since it desires what is useful for the animal's defense, can be taken as an appetitive parallel to the *vis aestimativa* or *cogitativa* (*S.T.* I, 81, 2 *ad* 2). Thomas argues that, since desire and anger can be in conflict with each other, they cannot belong to the same power. But it is the concupiscible appetite that is primary; the irascible appetite is the "champion and defender" of the concupiscible appetite; and the movements or passions of the irascible appetite begin and end in the movements or passions of the concupiscible appetite (*S.T.* I, 81, 2). Because of this essentially subordinate and defensive function of the irascible appetite, it is the concupiscible appetite that is of primary importance when we consider the implications of Thomas's account of good as the object of appetite. For the objects aimed at by the irascible appetite are desired because they are useful as means to preserve and defend the goods desired by the concupiscible appetite. However, because the irascible appetite desires what is useful and what therefore need not be pleasant to the senses, it is not correct to regard the object of sensitive appetite as simply what provides pleasure for the senses; rather, this is the object of the concupiscible appetite (S.T. I, 81, 2 ad 2). Both the concupiscible appetite and the irascible appetite are the subjects of passions or emotions (S.T. I-II, 23, 1c). For the passions, because they involve physical changes in a person's body, belong, in Thomas's view, to the sensitive appetite rather than to the intellectual appetite or will (S.T. I-II, 22, 3c). The concupiscible and irascible appetites are also the subjects of the virtues which regulate the passions (S.T. I-II, 56, 4 ad 4). The concupiscible appetite is the subject of temperance, and the irascible appetite is the subject of fortitude (S.T. I-II, 61, 3c). But these parts of the sensitive appetite possess such virtues only in the case of human beings and not in the case of brute animals; for Thomas says:

> The irascible and concupiscible powers considered in isolation as part of the sensitive appetite are common to us and to brute animals. Yet inasmuch as they are rational by participation, as obeying reason, they are thus proper to man, and in this way

can be a seat of human virtue" (S.T. I-II, 56, 4 ad 1).

Before we go on to consider Thomas's account of the intellectual or rational appetite, two topics that involve both natural inclinations and sense appetites require some further consideration. The first of these is Thomas's views on the criticism and regulation of these inclinations and appetites, and the second has to do with a certain ambiguity in his use of the term "natural inclination" that produces an overlap between the notions of natural inclination and sensitive appetite rather than a sharp distinction between them. As might be expected from someone who speaks of good as the object of desire or appetite, Thomas takes a generally favorable attitude toward the objects aimed at and the activities arising from natural inclinations, sensitive appetites, and desires generally. But Thomas's view that the virtues of temperance and fortitude are needed to regulate the activity of the sensitive appetite in human beings implies that more is needed to establish the goodness of a thing or activity than determining that it is actually aimed at by a sensitive appetite. Furthermore, Thomas does believe that appetite can be corrupted (S.T. II-II, 141, 2 ad 1) and that the movement of sensitive appetite to the goods proper to it sometimes is irrational and needs to be checked (S.T. II-II, 141, 3c). He grants that we sometimes speak of human wickedness (malitia) as natural:

> . . . either in the sense that bad habits are called 'second nature,' or as when we say that so and so is by nature irascible or lecherous, as being temperamentally prone to im-

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> moderate emotions (propter naturalem inclinationem)" (S.T. I, 63, 4 ad 2).

But he refrains from saying that it is the task of virtue to oppose natural inclination, as we can see from the following passage:

> By its nature each thing is bent on what fits it. And so human beings naturally crave an enjoyment that matches them. As such they are intelligent beings; consequently the pleasures they are equal to correspond to intelligence. On these temperance puts no restraint, though it does on those that are against intelligence. Clearly this is to agree and not to clash with the burden of human nature (inclinationi humanae naturae). Which is not to deny that temperance is against the grain for merely animal nature uncomplying with reason (inclinationi naturae bestialis non subjectae rationi) (S.T. II-II, 141, 1 ad 1).

We may also notice that when Thomas elsewhere considers the need of temperance in order to regulate sensitive appetite, he speaks of natural desires (concupiscentias) rather than of natural inclinations or appetites (S.T. I-II, 94, 3 ad 1). For it is not part of Thomas's position that every desire is for the really good. Thus, he says of the common desire (commune desiderium) to sell a thing for more than it is worth that such a desire belongs to vice rather than to nature (S.T. II-II, 77, 1 ad 2); and he says that selling a thing more dearly than it was bought is rightly criticized because such an action ministers to the love of gain (cupiditati lucri) (S.T. II-II, 77, 4c). The principles by which Thomas attempts to justify such negative judgments on certain desires and their related objects and activities have to be considered later, but it is important to be aware that Thomas is certainly willing to make unfavorable judgments on individual desires, appetites, and inclinations.

Secondly, as the previously quoted text on the relation between natural inclinations and precepts of the natural law (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c) shows, he uses the term "natural inclination" in two rather different ways. Sometimes it designates an inclination that is present in natural things, that is, things that are devoid of knowledge; at other times it designates an inclination that arises from a thing's nature. In the case of a higher or more complex being that possesses some kind of knowledge, its nature will include sensitive appetite and/or intellectual appetite. In such a case an inclination found in the sensitive or intellectual appetite is also spoken of as a natural inclination. Natural inclinations in this second sense are found in all beings that have natures of any sort, that is, in all beings. Natural inclinations in the first sense are not, however, confined to those beings that are devoid of knowledge; for instance, the inclination to self-preservation is found in all beings in this corruptible world. A further terminological point: the reader will have noticed that while we earlier equated natural inclinations and natural appetites, we have spoken of inclinations in the sensitive or intellectual appetite. This reflects Thomas's own usage and is based on the fact that, in his view, the sensitive appetite and the intellectual appetite are faculties that can have inclinations to a diversity of goods, while a natural appetite or inclination in a thing is possessed by the thing itself and not by its faculties. In this respect sensitive appetite and intellectual appetite resemble the rational potencies of Aristotle, which can be directed to contrary effects, or inclined to different objects, whereas the natural inclinations being directed simply to one object do not require the postulation of a mediating faculty.[12]

Rational Appetite or Will

Thomas's account of the will or rational appetite merits more extensive treatment by itself than we can provide here; many interesting problems in philosophical psychology must be set aside in this sketch of Thomas's views so that we may bring out those aspects of his account of the will that bear most directly on his notion of good and those that will be of most relevance to our subsequent discussion of the bases of his moral philosophy.

The most basic point about the will in Thomas's theory is that it is not an independent power but is rather a consequence of intellect. Will or intellectual appetite is found in all beings that have an intellect (God, angels, men) and only in those beings. Thus Thomas says: "As there is mind in God, so there is will; the one involves the other. . . . Anything with a mind has a will, just as a thing with sensation has emotional appetite" (*S.T.* I, 19, 1c). This is, of course, another instance of Thomas's basing the division of appetite on distinctions in cognition. The dependence of appetite on cognition is also found in his remark that the act of the will is "a drive from an inner and conscious want (*inclinatio quaedam procedens ab interiori principio cognoscente*)" (*S.T.* I-II, 6, 4c).[13] Thomas holds that the will, like the reason, is an incorporeal power: "For the will, as noted in the *De Anima*, is in the reason, and the reason is a psychological power unbound to any corporeal organ. The conclusion remains that the will at root is a power quite spiritual and bodiless" (*S.T.* I-II, 9, 5c). Thomas's reference here to *De Anima* III, 9. 432b5 is rather misleading, since he actually adopts a view that Aristotle is anxious to refute, namely, that desire is found in both the rational and the irrational parts of the soul. But the passage cited here, though wrongheaded as an exegesis of Aristotle, does make it clear that Thomas wants to assert a very close relationship between intellect or reason and will, even to the point of saying that the will is in the intellect. But he also wants to hold that will and intellect are distinct, except in the case of God, in whom both intellect and will are identical with his essence (*S.T.* I, 59, 2c), which is absolutely simple (*S.T.* I, 3, 7c). Thomas indicates the role of will in relation to intellect and activity in the following general terms:

> The will enters between the mind and the external action, for the mind proposes the object to the will, and the will causes the external action. Look for the start of the will's motion in the mind's apprehension of universal good; look for the finish in the action whereby a man stretches to arrive at a real object other than himself: for the motion of will is from soul to thing" (*S.T.* I-II, 13, 5 *ad* 1).

As we shall see, Thomas draws intellect and will very close together in his account of human choice, and he wishes to preserve the unity of the human agent.[14] But the contrast between intellect and will, between apprehension and appetite, is a constant theme in his writings. Two passages may serve to illustrate this contrast:

> However there is this difference between desire (*appetitum*) and intellect or any kind of knowledge, that knowledge means

> that the object is in the knower; whereas desire means that the one who desires goes out to the thing itself which he desires. Thus the end or term of desire, which is the good, is in the thing desired; whereas the end or term of knowledge, which is truth, is in the mind" (S.T. I, 16, 1c).
>
> . . . Similarly, intellect and will cannot be the same thing in angels or in human beings. For knowledge occurs by the fact that something known is in a knower; so that his intellect reaches to what is not itself in virtue of this, that what is not essentially itself is essentially able to exist somewhere in itself. The will, on the contrary, reaches to what is not itself in virtue of a certain orientation (*inclinatione*) inclining it towards the reality of a thing external to itself. Now the power whereby a subject is able to possess in itself that which exists as not itself is one power, and that whereby it itself tends toward what is not itself is another. In every creature then intellect must be other than will" (*S.T.* I, 59, 2c).

The will, for Thomas, is directed to things outside the person which can satisfy the wants, desires, and appetites of the person rather than to states and conditions of the person himself. But it is not merely pointing or inclined to external things, as the needle of a compass might point to the north; rather, it is causally active and employs the other powers of the person to obtain in reality that to which it is inclined. It is dependent on the intellect, however, for knowledge of its object, since, where such knowledge is absent, Thomas would speak of natural inclination or appetite rather than of will and its acts. So there is and there must be a material overlapping between the objects of intellect and the objects of will; but this requirement does not eliminate the distinction between the two faculties; "That which is known and sought after is one subject but taken under two aspects. It is known as a being that is sensed or understood, it is desired as something desirable or good. Different powers must bear on different aspects of things, but need

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not bear on different concrete things" (S.T. I, 80, 1 ad 2).

Thomas distinguishes two ways in which the will is related to its objects:

> The will has a twofold relation to the object willed. First, according as this is in the one who wills by a certain proportion or order to it. Hence the things which are shaped by their nature towards an end are said to desire it naturally. Yet to possess a thing thus is to possess it imperfectly. Now every unachieved thing (imperfectum) tends to be achieved (perfectum). Consequently both natural and voluntary appetite tend to possess their end in reality; which is to possess it perfectly; this is the second relation of the will to an object willed (S.T. I-II, 16, 4c).

In the case of God, this orientation of the will to its object is not an outward-looking or other-directed tendency, since he "possess in himself both the totality of being and the totality of goodness" (S.T. I, 59, 2c). But in the case of creatures will always involves an outward orientation to the things that are desired and to the real possession of such things, which are normally obtained by external activity of one sort or another. Because of this orientation to goods external to the person, the will causes external activity and physical movement. But the activity of the will does not always, according to Thomas, imply the absence of a good which is still to be attained:

> The will is an appetitive part in our case. Despite the fact that it is named from wanting (appetendo), appetite (appetitus) or desire is active not only when seeking what is not yet possessed but also when delighting in what is. It is in the last sense that we attribute will in God, for his will always holds the good which is its objective, since, as we have pointed out, this is not distinct from the very nature of his being (S.T. I, 19, 1 ad 2).

Thomas attributes the two activities of seeking the good not yet possessed and of enjoying it when it is possessed not merely to intelligent beings but also to natural non-intelligent beings. He is then able to invoke this double appetitive activity in explanation of both motion and rest: "Now the bearing of a thing to a form natural to it is this: that when not possessed it tends there, and when possessed it stays" (S.T. I, 19, 1c). It remains true, however, that for Thomas the activity of the appetitive power is usually linked to movement rather than to rest.[15] But more fundamental than this distinction between appetitive activity directed to goods possessed and appetitive activity directed to goods not possessed is what is common to them both. This is the first act of appetite and will, namely, love:

> Now some of activities of will and appetite are engaged with good qualified by certain conditions, thus joy and delight are with a good that is present and held, desire and hope with a good that is not yet possessed. Love, however, is for what is good and simply so, unqualified by whether it is possessed or not. Hence of its nature it starts all activity of appetite and will. Consequently all other motions of appetite and will presuppose love; it is like their very root. No one desires an object or rejoices in it unless it be a good that is loved. Nor is there any hatred, except for what is contrary to a thing loved. On this account wherever there is appetite or will there must be love (S.T. I, 20, 1c).

Object of the Will

Having sketched the main lines of what Thomas thinks the will is and what its fundamental acts are, we must now consider in this chapter and the following topics that are of special relevance to Thomas's concept of good: 1) the object of the will, 2) necessity and freedom in the activity of the will; 3) the possibility of choice of the bad and of sin. "The object of the will" is perhaps a puzzling expression. We know that our desires are directed to many different, frequently incompatible things; and it seems misleading to look for one " object of the will" or even for one non-tautologous description that will apply to all the diverse things that we will or desire. Thomas's view is that the object of the will is good in general (*bonum in communi*) or universal good (*bonum universale*) or the character of good (*ratio boni*). Elucidating what is involved in this claim and what its bearing is on the definition of good will be a major concern of the following sections of this chapter and will lead us directly to the issues of freedom and choice of evil that have already been mentioned.

We can begin by observing that when Thomas speaks of "the object of the will," he seems to have in mind not some one thing that we might or do always desire.[16] The will, as we have already seen, is an appetite that follows on rational or intellectual cognition; and, for Thomas, it is dependent on the intellect not merely for its existence but also for a most important aspect of its activity:

> We turn next to the object. This is a principle of motion in that it determines activity in the manner of a formal cause. . . . The primordial form for all things is transcendental being and being true (*ens et verum universale*), which is the object of mind (*intellectus*). And so, in a manner of motion from the formal cause, that is by presenting the object, the mind moves the will to its activity (*S.T.* I-II, 9, 1c).

Without the knowledge of things capable of being desired that comes through the activity of the senses and the intellect, there can be no question of the will's desiring anything, precisely because it is an intellectual appetitite. What the will desires is always something known. In any act of the will, what serves as its specifying principle and gives it what we may call its content is the object, which is known by the intellect. So the object determines the activity of the will formally, making it to be the kind of act that it is. Thomas observes: "Here the first relevant factor is what provides a thing's specific character. As in a physical thing this is given by its form, so in an action this is given by its objective character (objecto), as also in motion this comes from its term" (S.T. I-II, 18, 2c). The notion of the object of the will, as this is found in specific acts of the will, will require further elucidation when we consider the bearing of an act's object on the determination of the act's goodness. With regard to its object, then, the will is passive and receptive in relation to the intellect: "And it is in this sense that understanding (intellectus) has priority over willing; it is like the priority of a source of movement over a recipient of movement or of an agent cause over a recipient. It is good understood that gets the will moving." (S.T. I, 82, 3 ad 2). For Thomas, this passivity of the will is a characteristic common to all appetitive powers:

> Intellectual appetite has to be distinguished from sensitive. Such appetitite is a passive power, born to be moved by a thing apprehended. This, known and loved, sets in motion but is not set in motion, whereas the appetite sets in motion and is set in motion, as remarked in the De Anima III and Metaphysics XII (S.T. I, 80, 2c).

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But this passivity should not be taken as destroying the freedom of the will; for the will, as this text itself indicates, is both mover and moved. The will remains a power "which was made to be moved freely by the judgment of reason" (S.T. I-II, 73, 6c).

What general characterization does Thomas offer for the object of the will as this is presented to it by the intellect? In the first place, the object, whatever it may be, is good: "Willing is rational appetition, and there is no appetition except for a good, because appetition is nothing other than a certain bent towards a thing that is wanted, a thing that is matching and complementary" (S.T. I-II, 8, 1c). For Thomas, the claim that objects of the will are good follows from his views that the will is a kind of appetite and that all appetites are directed to good; and it does not turn on anything that is proper to the will as contrasted with other appetites. The problems that arise from this claim with regard to choice of the bad and with regard to Thomas's metaphysical thesis that all beings are as such good will be considered later.

Secondly, the object willed can be either a means or an end; but the activity of the will is directed primarily to the end, that is, to what is "purely a goodness for its own sake, and therefore directly willed" (S.T. I-II, 8, 2c). However, "the character of being good (ratio boni), which is the interest (objectum) of our power of will, is present not only in the end, but also in the things that lead to it" (S.T. I-II, 8, 2c).

Thirdly, the will is directed, not simply to particular good things as the sense appetites are, but to good in general or common good (bonum commune):

> Now since the will, like the mind (intellectus), is a certain non-material force, there corresponds to it one common reality, namely, being good, as there corresponds to mind one common reality, namely, being true and being real and so forth. This universal good (bono communi) embraces many particular goods, towards none of which is there a determinism within the will (*S.T.* I, 10, 1 *ad* 3).

This relation to good in general is a natural inclination in the will of the same kind as the natural inclinations or appetites that we earlier saw were present in the powers or faculties of intelligent beings.[17] Thomas explains:

> So also is it with the will; the beginning of its motions has to be something that is willed naturally. This is the good as common to all things (bonum in communi). This is that to which the will by nature tends, like any power to its proper object (*S.T.* I, 10, 1c).

Fourthly, the will's natural inclinations to universal goodness involves a necessary movement of the will to a particular object if that object is completely or universally good: "Accordingly if the will is offered an object universally good (universaliter bonum) and good from every point of view (secundum omnem considerationem), then it will respond to it of necessity if it wills anything at all" (*S.T.* I-II, 10, 2c). As we shall see, this claim is of particular importance in appraising Thomas's account of beatitude or happiness.

Fifthly, the direction to good in general is somehow present and operative in each act of the will directed to particular goods: "Intellectual appetite, though it bears on objects which exist outside the soul as concrete particulars, nevertheless attains in them a universal object of reason, desiring a thing precisely because it is good (S.T. I, 80, 2 ad 2). From this text it is clear that any object of the will's activity is not merely in fact good but that it is willed because it is good.

Sixthly, the good in general serves not simply as a reason for the agent but also as a goal and final cause for the agent's use of his powers in voluntary activity:

> Now being good as such (bonum in communi) has the meaning of being the purpose and the end. It is the will's object. Consequently the will moves the other powers to their activity. . . . In human acts we make use of them when we will. The ends they achieve, as being certain particular goods, are comprehended in the will's object (S.T. I-II, 9, 1c).

Seventhly, as the preceding text indicates, the goods that are the objects of specific powers, faculties, and appetites within the human person are included within the good that is the object of will, much as particulars are included within a universal. So, in discussing the mutual relations of intellect and will, Thomas makes the following comment:

> Will and intellect mutually include one another; for intellect understands will, and will wills intellect to understand. Thus, among things related to will as its objects are found also objects of intellect, and vice versa. Hence when we consider things as desirable (in ordine appetibilium), good has the condition of universal and truth that of particular; but when we consider things as intelligible the converse is true (S.T. I, 16, 4 ad 1).

Truth is, as Thomas goes on to say here, "a kind of good." More precisely, we can catch Thomas's meaning if we think of truth and the objects of the other human powers as specific goods, goods of a certain kind, not as particular goods experienced by or present in particular beings under particular conditions. Whether all the objects that are good for man are included in the various specific goods that correspond to the various powers and inclinations of man other than the will is a point that Thomas leaves somewhat unclear. The underlying issue is whether the will has a good that is specific to it and that is therefore less general than universal good. In the following passage, Thomas seems to imply that there are no goods specific to the will:

> For the will wants, not only its own immediate object,[18] but also all that corresponds to each of the other powers and to the whole man. By nature he wills all that matches his entire ability, not just his will, for instance to know the truth, to be, to live, and so forth, indeed all that relates to the integrity he was born to have: the universal object of will embraces all these as so many particular goods (S.T. I, 10, 1c).

In this text, especially if one consults the Latin, it looks as if will is directed to the universal good as its proper object, under which are ranged the specific goods that correspond to the various natural inclinations. On the other hand, when Thomas speaks of the goods that can be desired by the intellectual appetite or will in contrast to those that are desired by the sensitive appetite, he says that "we can, by intellectual desire (*appetitum*), desire non-material goods which sense cannot grasp, such as knowledge, virtue, and so on" (S.T. I, 80, 2 *ad* 2). Now at least one of the goods he mentions here, namely, knowledge, clearly corresponds to the power of intellect and is a specific good of the type already mentioned; the same point also applies to the intellectual virtues. But the moral virtues, as Thomas says elsewhere, are goods precisely in and for the appetitive powers:

> And so for a man to act well it is requisite that not only his reason be well disposed through a habit of intellectual virtue, but also that his appetite be well disposed through a habit of moral virtue. As appetition differs from the cognition of reason, so does moral differ from intellectual virtue (S.T. I-II, 58, 2c).

We have already seen that, according to Thomas, temperance is in the concupiscible appetite and fortitude in the irascible appetite. Prudence, on the other hand, is an intellectual virtue. Of the cardinal virtues, it is justice alone that is in the will: "And so virtues of this sort which set man's love on God or his neighbour, such as charity, justice, and the like, are in the will as in their subject" (S.T. I-II, 56, 6c). So it would seem that justice must count as a specific good corresponding to the will taken as a specific human power but included within the will's general object.

Eighthly, Thomas does not want his view that the object of the will is good to exclude the will's being active with regard to evil. Thus he says:

> The same power deals with opposites, but not in the same manner with each. The will is related both to good and evil, but to the good as to be sought, to the bad as to be shunned. The actual desire of good is called willing or volition - it is in this sense that we are taking the term voluntas. The shrinking from evil might well be called 'nolition', noluntas, which is about evil as volition is about good (S.T. I-II, 8, 1 ad 1).

The difficulties involved in Thomas's efforts to combine the view that will is always directed to the good with the possibility of sin or of the choice of evil will be considered shortly; but in this text Thomas is interested in affirming that the will's activity can be aversive as well as appetitive. He does not argue explicitly that the will's aversions are logically dependent on its appetites; such a move would be comparable to his claim that irascible appetite is logically dependent on concupiscible appetite.

Ninthly, because reason is capable of comparing different things, the will or rational appetite can be moved by different things, unlike the sense appetite, which, according to Thomas, inclines to one determinate thing at any given time (S.T. I, 82, 2 ad 3).

Tenthly, the object of the will as this is presented to it by the intellect already has the character of good (rationem boni). This character itself falls within the range of the object of the intellect, the true: "But 'true' is a more fundamental term still, pointing to the idea of good itself-- a good is something true" (S.T. I, 82, 3 ad 1).

Criticisms

After this review of the claims that Thomas makes about the object of the will, there is need of an assessment of the bearing of these claims on his account of non-moral value. In the first place, we should notice that there are two rather different conceptions of the will at work here. The first and less prominent one, but still indispensable for certain reasons that we shall see later, is the notion of will precisely as intellectual appetite, that is, as the inclination of the intellect or of the purely intellectual being (in the case of God and the angels) to the goods that are appropriate objects for it. This sort of appetite or inclination is parallel to natural and sensitive appetites and inclinations and is simply a consequence of the higher level of knowledge found in rational and intellectual beings. This notion is present when Thomas speaks of will as a consequence of intellect in intellectual beings and in his discussion of the specific goods that are included under the notion of good in general. As we have seen, these include goods, such as knowledge and truth, that are objects to which the intellect has a natural inclination. In the future we shall speak of will in this sense as the appetite of the intellect.

But there is also a second, rather different conception of the will at work here, namely, will as power of choice and decision. In this notion of the will, its activity can be directed to material things as well as to immaterial goods. The activity of the will in this second notion is still directed to objects that are presented to it by the intellect. Will, however, chooses and acts not simply for itself but for other powers and for the entire person. It is inclined to and chooses objects for the reason that they are good. Thus it remains an intellectual or rational appetite and can only be present in an intellectual or rational being; but its objects are not necessarily intellectual or immaterial. Will, in this second conception, is not a special inclination or kind of appetite; rather, it is the power or faculty which regulates activity with regard to the satisfaction of all appetites and inclinations. Such a power is only important in the case of a being with a plurality of inclinations or appetites, though not all beings that have a plurality of inclinations have such a power. Thus, for instance, brute animals, since they lack reason, do not have such a power. We shall speak of will in this second sense as the faculty of choice. The difference between these two conceptions of the will will become important when we consider Thomas's account of human happiness or beatitude.

Second, there are also certain ambiguities in the way that Thomas characterizes the object of the will. He speaks of this as universal good (bonum universale); and, as we shall see, he identifies it with God (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c).[19] The difficulties involved in this identification are essentially those that arise from Thomas's theory of participation and his view that God contains all perfections within himself; examination of these difficulties belongs to a discussion of Thomas's metaphysics and his natural theology and will have to be omitted here. For our purposes we must recognize that what Thomas says about the inclusion of particular goods within the general object of the will can, in the context of his system as a whole, be translated into talk about the inclusion of created goods within the uncreated good. In the order of things to be desired, universal good or God is in effect a subsistent universal,[20] and is not merely an abstract characterization of what is common to all specific objects of the will. This suggests some modification of our earlier claim that Thomas, in speaking of the object of the will, is referring simply to what is common to what we desire and not to one thing that is desired in all acts of the will. That claim stands in so far as we consider the content of the actual intentions and desires of human agents in the conditions of this life; for Thomas nowhere asserts that in all of our choices we are consciously aiming at or choosing God. He does make this a condition for the moral goodness of acts when he says, "For an act of human will to be morally good, then, it must be ordered to the supreme good (summum bonum) (S.T. I-II, 19, 10c). But Thomas does not believe that all actions are morally good. Though they fail to be morally good for various other reasons, there is no reason to believe that Thomas thinks that such failure is always for these other reasons. So there is no reason to think that Thomas is committed to holding that all human acts of the will are consciously directed to the supreme good or God. But Thomas does believe that all the goods that we aim at in this life and that we take to be the objects of our voluntary activity are in fact somehow included in the goodness of God. He is then able to present the will's activity in regard to particular goods in two different ways: as related to the formal object of the will, which is good in general, and as related to God, who is both the highest good and in some way the universal good. In this second way, his account of the will's activity can be taken as the scholastic metaphysical counterpart of Augustine's famous remark in the Confessions on the movement of man's desires toward God: "For Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee."[21] Thus the direction of the will to an object which transcends the particulars that are actually attained, as universal good transcends and is not exhausted by particular goods, is parallel to the heart's orientation to a perfectly satisfying divine good. But Thomas's first way of regarding the activity of the will as directed to universal good is still available even to those who would deny that there is a God or that all goods or perfections are somehow included in God. For particular goods can still be regarded as falling under universal good, even if there does not exist a being that can be regarded as including within itself all goods.[22]

The difference between these two ways of thinking of universal good is paralleled by a difference in two ways of thinking about particular goods. In the first way, particular goods are regarded simply as instances of good in general; in the second way, they are regarded as means to the attainment of universal good or God. A good example of the way in which Thomas weaves together these two ways of regarding particular goods without drawing any sharp distinction between them can be found in the following passage:

> Now being good as such (bonum in communi), that is, taken without restriction has the meaning of being the purpose and the end. It is the will's object. Consequently the will moves other powers to their activity. . . . In human acts we make use of them when we will. The ends they achieve, as being certain particular goods, are comprehended in the will's object. Now it is always the case that a power or training (ars) set on a universal end sways a power or training set on some particular end embraced in that comprehensive end. Thus a general concerned with the common good (bonum commune) namely the effectiveness of the whole army, commands the regimental officer responsible for one formation (S.T. I-II, 9, 1c).

Even if a specific good is the end of a power or art and all specific goods fall under the notion of good in general, it does not follow, as Thomas suggests here, that the end of these specific goods is good in general or a subsistent universal good. For, even if specific goods are participations in the universal good, it does not follow that they are therefore means that are causally conducive to the attainment of that good. If the will has as its object a subsistent universal good, then it may be plausible to regard it as directing its activities and those of the powers subordinate to it to that end, though it would still remain to be shown just how these activities are conducive to the attainment of the ultimate end. On the other hand, if the will has as its object what is common to all specific goods, namely, the abstract character of goodness, or if the object of the will is taken to be simply the sum of the specific goods that are appropriate to the various powers and inclinations of human agents, then there is no reason to regard the specific goods as being inherently means to a further end beyond themselves. The specific goods may, of course, serve as means to a further end by reason of the intentions of a particular agent, e.g., the person who seeks knowledge in order to get a better paying job or the person who practices a virtue in order to impress others. As we shall see in Chapter 5, this ambiguity in the way in which Thomas thinks of the relationship of particular goods to universal good is very relevant to the question of whether happiness is to be conceived as a dominant or an inclusive end.

A further terminological ambiguity is to be found in the passage just quoted; and it should be considered, at least briefly. One of the terms that Thomas regularly uses in talking about good in general or good as such and about the object of the will is bonum commune, the good that is common to all good things. This is an expression that he also uses in his political and legal theory to refer to the good of a group or community. Legal justice, he observes in his discussion of justice as a cardinal virtue, directs man immediately to the common good (bonum commune), whereas the other virtues regulate man with regard to particular goods (S.T. II-II, 58, 7c). He also defines law as "an ordinance of reason for the common good (bonum commune) made by the authority who has care of the community and promulgated" (S.T. I-II, 90, 4c). The common good, understood in this sense as the good of a community, can, like God taken as the universal good, be regarded as an end to which individual goods may be treated as means, even in some cases being sacrificed for the attainment of that further or ultimate good.

Third, after we distinguish between the universal good understood in a purely formal and abstract way and the universal good as identified with God, the claim that the object of the will is universal good or good as such can be taken in two different ways. In the first of these, good serves as the category under which all objects of inclination, appetite, and desire are to be ranged. Everything that confronts the will or power of choice as an object of choice falls into this category. "Willing is rational appetition, and there is no appetition except for a good" (S.T. I, 8, 1c). Every object of the activity of the will is good; and the number of things that can be objects of the will is potentially infinite. Further, no one of these is simply "the object of the will," attainment of which satisfies the will. In the second way, the claim that the object of the will is universal good is taken as indicating an orientation of the will, not to particular good things which can also be the objects of other appetites, but to an immaterial good that is proper to the will as against all lesser appetites and that is not attainable in our present earthly experience. It seems to me that Thomas in the treatise on man (S.T. I, 75-89) and in the treatise on the psychology of human acts (S.T. I-II, 6-17) relies mainly on the first way of interpreting the claim that the object of the will is universal good, and that in the treatise on beatitude (S.T. I-II, 1-5) his argument relies on the second way of interpreting this claim.

Fourth, Thomas's claim that the object of the will is presented to it by the intellect is of considerable importance to any account of Thomas's views on the problem of the cognitive status of evaluative judgments. When we raise the question of just when a thing begins to count as good in Thomas's account of the activity of the will, we are raising a metaethical question. If a thing counts as good by virtue of being chosen or desired by the will, then Thomas seems to be adopting a naturalistic reading of Aristotle's dictum that good is what all things desire, or possibly an emotivist reading of it. When one says that a thing is good one is equivalently reporting that the thing is in fact desired. Alternatively, by saying that a thing is good, one could be expressing one's desire for the thing. But a closer reading of Thomas's text rules out both these alternatives. For it is Thomas's view that, prior to the activity of the will, the intellect already grasps the object as good. This is part of the meaning of Thomas's claim that the true, the object of the intellect, and the good, the object of the will, include each other:

> Good and true include each other. For truth is a good thing, otherwise we would not desire it, and good is something true, otherwise we should not know about it. So that as an object of desire can be truth in so far as it has the character of goodness (rationem boni), in the same way the object of the practical mind is good to be done, known to be truly such (S.T. I, 79, 11 ad 2).

Here it is clear that Thomas means to adopt a cognitivist view of practical judgments, since the notion of truth applies to them, and since in the same article he affirms that practical intellect and speculative intellect are not different powers (S.T. I, 79, 11c). The other side of this mutual inclusion is that the truth is one of the things that the will can desire: "Hence when we consider things as desirable, good has the condition of universal, and truth that of particular; but when we consider things as intelligible, the converse is true" (S.T. I, 16, 4 ad 1). Perhaps the passage in which Thomas most clearly asserts that the intellect establishes the goodness of a thing before it is actually desired by the will is the following:

> The object of understanding is simpler and more absolute than that of will. For the object of understanding is the very meaning of appetible good (ratio boni appetibilis), whereas an appetible good, the meaning (ratio) of which is in the understanding is the object of will (S.T. I, 82, 3c).

The same point is also made in a passage previously cited, where

Thomas says that will desires a thing "precisely because it is good" (S.T. I, 80, 2 ad 2). Here the intellect's grasp of a thing as good serves as a reason for the will actually to desire it. When we examine the problem of Thomas's views on the definition of good, we will consider the question of what the intellect knows when it knows that an object is good. But at any rate it is clear that when one says that a thing is good one is not reporting that one actually desires it oneself. The cognitivist position that Thomas adopts affirms that the intellect is practical prior to the activity of the will: "But with respect to the form and meaning of activity, which is defined by its object, the mind sets the will in motion, for a good is perceived as a special sample included within the general range of being true" (S.T. I-II, 9, 1 ad 3). Without its ability to grasp the goodness of things, the intellect would not be able to move the other powers or to serve as the cause of activity:

> An image or imagined form of an object without some appraisal that it is beneficial or harmful leaves the sensitive appetite unmoved. It is the same with the apprehension of a truth apart from its being good and desirable. Accordingly, Aristotle observes that we are moved, not by the theoretical, but by the practical reason (S.T. I-II, 9, 1 ad 2).

Germain Grisez rightly interprets Thomas's thought on this issue when he says:

> Practical reason, therefore, presupposes good. In its role as active principle the mind must think in terms of what can be an object of tendency. In other terms the mind can think, but then it will not set out to cause what it thinks.[23]

Footnotes to Chapter I

[1] This and subsequent quotations from the Summa Theologiae are taken from the translation edited by Thomas Gilby, O.P., and published by Blackfriars in conjunction with McGraw-Hill Book Company of New York and Eyre & Spottiswoode of London beginning in 1963.

[2] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, I. 1. 1094a3.

[3] D.J. O'Connor, Aquinas and the Natural Law (London: MacMillan, 1967), p. 19.

[4] Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle, tr. John P. Rowan (Chicago: Regnery, 1961), I, p. 341.

[5] See Germain Grisez, "The First Principle of Practical Reason: A Commentary on the Summa Theologiae, 1-2, Question 94, Article 2," in Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Anthony Kenny (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1969), p. 354 n.

[6] See also S.T. I-II, 11, 2 *ad* 3.

[7] See Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on the Nichomachean Ethics of Aristotle (Chicago: Regnery, 1964), I, pp. 8-9.

[8] Anthony Kenny, The Five Ways, (New York: Schocken, 1969), p. 100.

[9] See also S.T. I, 82, 3 *ad* 1.

[10] Aristotle, Politics, I. 5. 1254b5. See also S.T. I, 81, 3 *ad* 2; S.T. I-II, 56, 4 *ad* 3.

[11] Plato, Republic, IV. 437b-441c.

[12] Aristotle, Metaphysics, IX. 2. 1046b1-24

[13] *Principio* should be translated "source" or "principle" rather than "want."

[14] See S.T. I, 76, 1, 3, 4, 8; I-II, 17, 4; II-II, 58, 2; for texts illustrating this tendency in Thomas's philosophical psychology.

[15] See S.T. I, 81, 1c.

[16] See S.T. I, 6, 2 *ad* 2, where Thomas says that the Aristotelian dictum that good is what everything desires "does not mean that every good is desired by everything, but that whatever is desired is good."

[17] See S.T. I, 80, 1 *ad* 3.

[18] The Latin here, *ea quae pertinent ad potentiam voluntatis*, is a good deal vaguer than the English rendering and does not affirm that the will has "an immediate object."

[19] See S.T. I, 59, 2c; I-II, 9, 6c; where the same identification is made.

[20] See S.T. I, 6, 4c; where Thomas discusses the Platonic source of this claim, while he rejects subsistent ideas of natural things.

[21] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, I. 1; tr. J. G. Pilkington, in *The Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, ed. Whitney J. Oates (New York: Random House, 1948), I, 3.

[22] An illustration of one way of developing this sort of atheistic Platonism can be seen in Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good* (New York: Schocken, 1971), pp. 29, 55-76.

[23] Germain Grisez, "The First Principle of Practical Reason," in *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Antony Kenny (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1969), p. 353.

CHAPTER II

NECESSITY AND FREEDOM IN THE WILL

Necessary Movements of the Will and Their Objects

We now have to consider two interrelated problems presented by Thomas's doctrine that the object of the will is universal good. First, if the intellect presents an object to the will as good, is the will free to reject it? and, if it does so, how is this possible? Second, is it possible, in Thomas's view, for an object of the will to fail to be good? We may call the first of these problems the problem of freedom and the second the problem of choice of the bad or evil.

In considering the first problem, we may begin with Vernon Bourke's comment: "It is important to note that the Thomistic theory of will does not suggest that all volitions are free. Instead, it is essential to the view that some movements of human willing be recognized as determined by the nature of man"[1] That not all movements of the will are free is a conclusion that should not surprise us when we realize that Thomas's general account of the will assimilates it to natural appetites and inclinations. The fundamental point that Thomas makes about voluntary activity, following Aristotle,[2] is that it proceeds from an internal knowing principle (S.T. I-II, 6, 4c). What is strictly incompatible with voluntari-

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ness in activity is violence, which comes from outside the agent: "The violent is directly counter to the voluntary, as also indeed to the natural. For both voluntary and natural activity have this in common, that they well up from an intrinsic source, whereas violent activity is injected by an extrinsic force" (S.T. I-II, 6, 5c). An act that is coerced or violent cannot, by that very fact, be an act of will (S.T. I-II, 6, 4c). So long as the act proceeds from a principle interior to the agent, whether it be free or necessary, it is voluntary. In fact, of the various acts of the will that Thomas distinguishes in his treatise on human acts in the Prima Secundae, only choice (electio) is said to be free. Bourke provides a concise listing of the acts of the will as distinguished by Thomas:

> Besides choice, St. Thomas discusses (in the course of S.T. I-II) five other acts of human willing. Wishing or willing an end (velle, q. 10, 2) is a simple movement of approval of something good in itself, an end. Enjoyment (fruitio, q. 11, 4) is a resting of the will in a good that has been attained, whether imperfect or perfect; it is volitional satisfaction. Intention (intentio, q. 12, 1, ad 4m) is a volitional act of tending toward an end as something for which to strive. Consent (consensus, q. 15, 1) is a volitional act of accepting certain means as appropriate to the end under consideration. Use (usus, q. 16, 1) is a will-act of applying other powers of the person, or other things, in the execution of an action.[3]

Most of what we will have to say about necessary movements of the will applies to wishing and intention, since these activities bear directly on ends and since they are prior to choice and so not dependent on it.

We find that Thomas speaks in numerous places of a variety of necessary movements of the will to different objects. As we saw in considering Thomas's thought on natural inclinations, he asserts: "A thing has a natural tendency towards its own good, to obtain it when it has not got it and to rest with it when it has" (S.T. I, 19, 2c). Thomas quite clearly affirms that necessity, unlike coercion or violence, is not incompatible with voluntariness: "Natural necessity is not incompatible with willing. Indeed it is most necessary that the will of necessity cleave to its final fulfilment, happiness, just as the understanding must of necessity cleave to first principles" (S.T. I, 82, 1c). We should observe that in Thomas's discussions in this general area, he uses the terms "natural" and "necessary" almost interchangeably. This is not surprising; for in his view a tendency or inclination that a thing possesses by virtue of its nature is a tendency or inclination that it necessarily has by virtue of being the kind of thing that it is. A passage that illustrates the interchangeability of these terms and that also indicates the basic contrast within the class of voluntary actions between those that are necessary and those that are free is the following:

> We have free decision with respect to the things we do not will by necessity or natural instinct (naturali instinctu). Now we wish to be happy by an instinctive drive (naturalem instinctum) which is not of our own free choice. Other animals, which respond to their environment by natural instinct, are not spoken of as being moved by choice (S.T. I, 19, 10c).

This text should not be read as implying that anything that is the object of a natural inclination cannot be the object of free choice; for, as we have seen in considering Thomas's views on natural inclinations, he believes that these can provide the matter for precepts of natural law (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c) and that obedience or disobedience to such commands involves free choice. Rather, Thomas here proposes that the activity of human beings and of God can be explained either in terms of natural instinct alone or in terms of free choice. Just which natural inclinations other than the inclinations to one's own happiness are to be counted as natural instincts that set up a movement of will that is not subject to or dependent on free will is left unclear in this passage. But clearly not all natural inclinations can be natural instincts in the sense employed in this passage.

To what things, then, does the will have a necessary movement? First, and most fundamentally, it has a necessary movement to good in general, which is its proper object:

> So also is it with the will; the beginning of its motions has to be something that is willed naturally. This is the good as common to all things (bonum in communi). This is that to which the will by nature tends, like any power to its proper object. This good is also the ultimate end. . . moreover it embraces whatsoever answers to the nature of the person willing (S.T. I-II, 10, 1c).

What is particularly noteworthy in this text is that Thomas identifies the proper object of the will, good as common to all things, with the last end of the person willing and that he holds that this includes within itself the totality of the various goods corresponding to the nature of the person willing. Given these moves in his argument, it looks as if the last end should be taken to be a second-order good or an inclusive end which includes in itself the various first-order goods that correspond to the various powers of the person. As we have seen earlier, Thomas believes that every power has a natural inclination to its proper object and that this inclination holds irrespective of any personal deliberation or choice. So this claim applies also to the will and its proper object, namely, good in general. As we have already seen, the will may also have justice as a specific good that is proper to it; but Thomas does not say that the will has a necessary movement to the good that is justice, though he does say that there is a natural inclination to act according to virtue (S.T. I-II, 94, 3c). Thomas is willing to affirm that this necessary movement of the will to its proper object obtains not merely in the case of created persons but also in the case of God:

> His will is necessarily related to his own goodness, which is its proper objective (objectum). Hence he wills his own goodness necessarily, rather as we cannot but wish our own happiness. For that matter, every ability is similarly related to its proper and principal objective, like sight to colour, because to this it tends of its very nature (S.T. I, 19, 3c).

Somewhat more specific than this necessary movement of the will to good in general as its proper object is its necessary movement to an object that is completely good:

> Accordingly if the will be offered an object universally good (universaliter bonum) and good from every point of view (secundum omnem considerationem), then it will respond to it of necessity, that is, if it wills anything at all. It cannot will the opposite (S.T. I-II, 10, 2c).

Now Thomas believes that beatitude is precisely such a completely good object: "For beatitude is a perfect good, which completely satisfies appetite" (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c).[4] So there is a necessary movement of the person's will to his happiness or beatitude, which has already been mentioned as parallel to God's willing of his own goodness. Now, according to Thomas, this movement of the will to the perfectly good is the same as the person's movement to his last end, since "the ultimate end ought so to fill a man's whole desire that nothing is left beside for him to desire" (S.T. I-II, 1, 5c). This doctrine of the necessary movement of the person's will to beatitude commits Thomas to the thesis that a person cannot freely reject beatitude; but it does not commit him to the implausible views a person is always bound to will what he perceives to be to his own best interest or that a person always wills what is conducive to the final end or that persons are incapable of deeds of self-sacrifice. For Thomas is here speaking of the will's being confronted by an object that is perfectly good and that is known to be such in a way that does not admit of doubt or denial. Now no object that we can attain in our present experience meets this requirement. In this life the contemplation of God does not satisfy our hunger for food, nor does a knowledge of celestial mechanics still our craving for affection. Within the limits of this life, according to Thomas, perfect beatitude is not to be attained. "The general notion of happiness, of goodness perfect and sufficient, implies that every ill is banished and every desire fulfilled. Neither is possible in this life" (S.T. I, 5, 3c). So, for Thomas, no movement of the will to an object attainable in this life is necessary, since there is no object attainable in this life that is perfectly good and that completely satisfies desire; this thesis, however, requires certain qualifications, as we shall see.

The necessary movement of the will extends not merely to the last end but also to those things that are necessarily connected to it: "The ultimate end moves the will necessarily because it is the complete good. Likewise also whatever that involves (illa quae ordinantur ad hunc finem) and without which it cannot be possessed, thus to be and to live and so forth" (S.T. I-II, 10, 2 ad 3). Here Thomas claims that what is presupposed in the possession of the object by the human person is also an object of a necessary movement of the will. From this text, however, it is not clear whether Thomas regards these activities as presupposed by and logically included within the activity of contemplating God, which he holds is the essential constituent of beatitude or whether he regards them as means necessary to the attainment of beatitude but which might be desired for themselves and which might then be the objects of independent necessary movements of the will. Certainly, the Latin expression, illa quae ad hunc finem ordinantur, (literally, "those things that are directed to this end") is one that normally applies to means. On the other hand, when we are dealing, as Thomas is here, with ends that are ends to be attained and enjoyed by the person who is willing, it seems odd to regard existence and life simply as means to an end; for they are conditions necessary for the agent's personal attainment of any end whatever. Existence and life are both too general and too indispensable to be thought of as mere means, since no end to be attained and enjoyed by the agent could be attained by the agent without them and since they do not serve to lead to one particular end as against other ends of this sort.

Thomas handles this issue somewhat differently in another very important passage, which is also relevant to the interrelationship of beatitude and moral goodness and to the bearing of this necessary movement of the will to beatitude on our actual choices in this life:

> There are individual good things that have no necessary connection with happiness because a man can be happy without them, and the will does not have to cling to these. But other things have a necessary connection with happiness, those namely that join man to God in whom alone true happiness consists. Yet before the certitude enjoyed through seeing God proves the necessity of this link the will clings by necessity neither to God nor to the things of God. But the will of one who sees God's essence necessarily clings to God, just as even now (sicut nunc)[5] we cannot help willing to be happy (S.T. I, 82, 2c).

We might at first be tempted to take the things that "have a necessary connection with happiness" as being precisely those things which are logically presupposed by the contemplative activity that constitutes happiness, that is, existence and life. (There is, of course, a question about the necessity of life for happiness in the case of both angels and immortal souls separated from their bodies; but being alive is clearly required for happiness both in the case of human persons in this world and in a resurrection world). Both existence and life would be things without which a human person could not be happy; and so the will in desiring happiness would also necessarily desire these things, once it understands their necessity for happiness. But, as Thomas goes on, we suggest that he has something different in mind; for he speaks of those things that have a necessary connection with happiness because they "join man to God in whom alone true happiness consists." He also observes that the necessity of the connection between such things and happiness is only known with certainty by those who have the Beatific Vision, who see "God's essence." Now it is clearly not necessary to see God's essence in order to know that existence is necessary for happiness. One plausible interpretation of what Thomas is saying here is to take the things "that join man to God" as things that are included in what we would call morality and religion. More specifically, it is by the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity that man is directly related to God; as the following passage makes clear:

> The other, a happiness surpassing his nature, he can attain only by the power of God, by a kind of participation of the Godhead. . . . And so, to be sent to this supernatural happiness, he must needs be divinely endowed with some additional sources of activity. . . . Such sources of action are called theological virtues. They are called so both because God is their object, inasmuch as they direct us rightly to him and because they are infused in us by God alone; and because they are made known to us by divine revelation contained in Sacred Scripture (S.T. I-II, 62, 1c).

It is these virtues, which are infused into us by God's grace, that, for Thomas, most intimately relate human beings to God; and it is these virtues which can most properly be said to be necessary to that happiness which consists in seeing God's essence and whose connection with that happiness is only known with certainty by those who see God. One could, however, make a case for the view that among the things that have a necessary connection with happiness are the moral virtues and the actions that result from them, since it is certainly Thomas's view that the moral virtues are necessary, though not sufficient, for the attainment of human beatitude. A fuller presentation of this matter will have to wait until our consideration of Thomas's views on the relationship of the moral life to beatitude in Chapter VI.

What bears directly on our present task of enumerating those things to which, in Thomas's view, the will has a necessary movement is the very significant limitation that Thomas imposes here on the necessary movement of the will with regard both to what constitutes beatitude and what is necessary for its attainment. For, as Thomas would have to admit, given that in this life there are both atheists and sinners, the will does not necessarily move in all of its particular acts either to God or to acts of the moral and theological virtues. So for there to be a necessary movement of the will to something that is constitutive of or connected with beatitude, this thing must be known with certainty either to constitute perfect human beatitude or to be necessarily connected with it in some way. Just before proposing this cognitive requirement for there being a natural and necessary movement of the will to an object, Thomas has proposed a parallel between the intellect's necessary assent to first principles and the will's necessary movements (S.T. I, 82, 2c). Without following this parallel in all its details and without going into the question of what epistemological status Thomas would give to his own philosophical and theological conclusions, we would argue that, just as the proposition that God exists is a synthetic and non-self-evident proposition for Thomas

(S.T. I, 2, 1c) and so can be denied without falling into self-contradiction, so the will can refuse to direct its activity to God or to respond to his grace without renouncing the desire for happiness. This requirement that the natural and necessary movement of the will apply only to those things whose necessary connection with its primary object is known with certainty is not a requirement alien or extrinsic to the will itself; for the will's activity is always in Thomas's view, in response to an object as presented to it by the intellect. The resulting denial that there is a necessary movement of the will to God and to the acts of the moral and theological virtues accords with Thomas's and our understanding of the facts about human desires and decisions in this life. The movement of the will to God only becomes necessary for free and rational creatures when they see God's essence:

> All creatures who see his very essence are impelled by identically the same love both to love him as he is other than creatures and to love him as creation's general good (bonum commune). And because he is this general good, the term of all natural appetition, then whoever has the immediate vision of what he is cannot help but love him (S.T. I, 60, 5 ad 5).

In sum, then, the natural movements of the will are to good in general as the proper object of the will, to the last end, and to beatitude; but not to any particular good, even God, as constitutive of or necessary to beatitude. As we shall see in Chapter V, Thomas argues in his account of beatitude for an identification of the objects of these necessary movements of the will. In the context of the present discussion, we will refer to these objects of the natural and necessary movements of the will as general goods.

The Functions of Necessary Movements of the Will

We must now try to elucidate to some extent what Thomas means by this talk of a "necessary movement" of the will. In the first place, Thomas is not thinking of the will's movement to good and happiness as a kind of unconscious and probably irrational drive which determines our actions in an unsuspected way. A necessary movement of the will has no affinities with the drives of a Freudian id. Such a comparison is ruled out by Thomas's view that the will is a rational or intellectual appetite and by his attribution of necessary movements of will to God and purely spiritual beings. Of course, this Thomistic notion of the will does not rule out the possibility of there being in the human person one or more unconscious drives that determine the person's action; all it rules out is the possibility that such drives could be necessary movements of the will. In the second place, Thomas is not dealing with something that acts causally on the will, since he holds both that God's will has a necessary movement to the perfect good and his own goodness (S.T. I, 19, 3c) and that God is an uncaused cause (S.T. I, 2, 3c). Third, the claim that there is a necessary movement of the will to the goods in question here must at least mean that there is a real and not merely a logical or conceptual direction of the will to these goods, so that it is correct to say that the goods really are willed and desired. Without such a real movement of the will to these general goods, Thomas's account of the activity of the will in terms of the metaphysical principles of actuality and potentiality would, as we shall see, be in serious difficulty. Fourth, the object of the necessary movement of the will is not desired freely; it is desired voluntarily, that is, by a principle interior to the person willing with knowledge and without coercion. So it cannot be the object of free choice, which, for Thomas, is always a choice of means to an end (see S.T. I, 62, 8 ad 3; S.T. I, 82, 1 ad 3); and it cannot be matter for deliberation, since there is no question of a person's being free to reject or to remain indifferent to these general goods. Fifth, the necessary movement of the will is not to the object simply in itself, but to the object as it is grasped and presented to it by the intellect. Thus, as we have seen, Thomas holds that God is perfectly and supremely good and that his essence is goodness itself (S.T. I, 62, 8c): but he does not hold that there is a necessary movement of the will to God except in the case of those intellectual creatures who see the essence of God (S.T. I, 82, 2c) and who thus know with certainty that God is goodness. Sixthly, it is less clear just what psychological content the notion of a necessary movement of the will has. Thomas is certainly required by his use of this notion to rule out the possibility of certain psychological occurrences, e.g., a person's consciously rejecting beatitude or a good that is known to include all other goods. One way, then, of refuting Thomas's claims about necessary movements of the will would be to produce instances of such psychological occurrences. It is not clear whether he is required to postulate the occurrence of such psychological events as desiring one's own happiness that would count as instances of or evidence for these necessary movements of the will. It is clearly implausible to suppose that we are consciously desiring happiness or the last end or good in general at all times, or even whenver we desire any specific good things. Thomas admits as much when he observes that "the power of willing is constantly present to the will, but not the act of willing the end" (S.T. I-II, 9, 4 ad 2). Thomas also holds that, with regard to the exercise of the will's activity (which would, of course, be matter of particular psychological occurrences), "no object necessitates the will; whatever it is a man always has the power not to think about it, and consequently not actually to will it" (S.T. I-II, 10, 2c). So there is no requirement that the will be actually desiring these general goods at all times or even in all moments of choice, since one is free not to think of these general goods.

The way in which the necessary movement of the will to good in general, to the last end, and to beatitude affects and is present in particular choices will be discussed in our consideration of freedom of choice. Before confronting that topic, however, we should first briefly mention the chief functions that Thomas's doctrine of natural and necessary movements of the will has in his overall account of the will and its activity.

First, the doctrine serves as a way of relating the variety, unpredictableness, and apparent arbitrariness of human choices to certain basic principles of nature in such a way that it is possible for there to be at least a general philosophical account of human willing. The concern for the possibility of such an account is present in the following passage:

> Whatever is present though not essentially has always to be brought back to what is present essentially and originally. Hence if we take 'nature' in this sense, then the very principles of things are natural. You see this in the mind; the first beginnings of thought are known naturally. So also is it with the will; the beginning of its notions has to be something that is willed naturally. This is the good as common to all things (S.T. I-II, 10, 1c).

In this view particular choices and movements of the will directed to particular objects presuppose a natural and necessary movement of the will found essentially in all who possess human nature and are inapplicable without such a foundation: "Our choice of means is based on the volition of an end naturally desired" (S.T. I-II, 17, 9 *ad* 2). Thomas here is not interested in explaining the content of particular choices, as a psychologist or social scientist might be, but in accounting for the possibility of particular choices in terms of the universal principles of an Aristotelian science: "For whatever naturally and unchangeably goes with anything must be the basis and source for everything else. For in anything its nature is primary, and so also any change presupposes something changeless" (S.T. I, 82, 1c).

Second, Thomas takes this natural and necessary movement of the will to the general goods that are its objects as the basis for practical reasoning. He says, "When the will wills anything naturally it is more like understanding of first principles than like reason, which does embrace opposites" (S.T. I, 82, 1 *ad* 2). Thomas is fond of observing that "the end in a process of desire is like a first principle in a process of thought" (S.T. I-II, 9, 3c).[6] He explains this a bit more fully when he says that "in matters of practice the end has the force of a principle, because from it derive the reasons for adopting the means" (S.T. I-II, 14, 3c). There is, for Thomas, not simply a parallel between end and desire on the one hand and between principle and cognition on the other; but the naturally willed end serves as a principle for practical inquiry (S.T. I-II, 14, 5c). As we shall see, Thomas holds that the first and fundamental precept of the natural law, from which all others derive, is that "good is to be sought and done, evil to be avoided" (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c). This claim represents an effort, which we shall have to examine later, to base the precepts of the natural law on the necessary movement of the will to good in general.

The third important function that Thomas's doctrine of natural movements of the will serves has to do with his analysis of movements of the will in terms of actuality and potentiality. Thomas holds that, in order for the will to act, it must be moved to actuality by a principle exterior to itself which is already in act. This principle is God: "God moves man's will as universal mover to the universal object of will, which is the Good. A man cannot will anything without this universal motion" (S.T. I-II, 9, 6 ad 3). Otherwise, since the will is not always actually willing (S.T. I-II, 9, 3 ad 2), it would be in the position of moving itself from potentiality to actuality, that is, from being able to will to actually willing. But it is a basic principle of Thomas's Aristotelian metaphysics that "nothing is reduced from potentiality to actuality except by a being in actuality" (S.T. I, 79, 3c). So Thomas reaches the following conclusion:

> Anything which is an efficient cause sometimes actually but sometimes potentially needs to be set in motion by another for its active causation. The will is manifestly a case in point; it begins to will something after not having willed it, and consequently is moved by another (S.T. I-II, 9, 4c).

Without going into the difficult issues of theological determinism that are raised by this line of thought, let us point out that Thomas argues for the claim that God brings the will from potentiality to actuality, not on the basis of purely theological doctrines nor on the basis of an appeal to introspective personal experience, but as a conclusion from the general doctrine on actuality and potentiality that he accepts from Aristotle.[7] God's action in moving the will actually to desire universal good should obviously not be understood as a discrete event, the occurrence or non-occurrence of which could be ascertained in the personal experience of the human agent or by tests conducted by external observers. Rather, it is a metaphysical prerequisite for the activity of the human will whenever it actually wills or desires.

Furthermore, Thomas does not take God's action in moving the will to desire universal good to be a limitation on human freedom but rather to be a precondition for the exercise of that freedom. For the will "moves itself to willing the objects which are on account of the end because it wills the end" (S.T. I-II, 9, 4c). As we shall see, it is precisely in the realm of means that the human person is

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free to choose, according to Thomas. In the Aristotelian framework that Thomas employs in accounting for the will's activity, it is by reason of its actually willing the universal good that the will can freely choose and actually will what the intellect takes to be a means to that general end. Thus it is able to move itself with regard to the end because it has itself been reduced from potentiality to actuality by God, who serves as a sustaining condition of possibility for its self-moving activity. Since the movement imparted by God to the will is to universal good, it does not incline or determine the will to one particular good or class of goods over another. It should be looked on as a part of God's activity of creating and sustaining the human person in existence, and it should not be assimilated to God's special and gratuitous bestowal of grace (S.T. I-II, 9, 6c).

This movement of the will to universal good, which is divinely bestowed, is presupposed for particular desires and choices; and so it need not be required to appear as a particular psychological content in acts of the will. It holds much the same place in Thomas's account of the will's activity as does the agent intellect in his account of cognition (S.T. I, 79, 3-5), in that each is required in order to make its respective faculty or power active. As we said earlier in explicating the notion of a natural movement of the will, the natural movement of the will to good in general must be more than a logical relationship between two notions; for this natural movement is required as part of a metaphysical account of the causes of the will's activity. Like the natural inclinations discussed in the first section of this chapter, this natural movement of the will does not fall within the scope of our free choices; rather, it serves as their foundation and makes them possible. This is the point that underlies the following passage from Thomas:

> And that natural willing is the cause of every other; we will nothing except for the end's sake. Hence the distinction between natural love and the love that involves choice: the former is of the good which man desires as his end; the latter, deriving from it, is of goods man may desire in view of the end (S.T. I, 60, 2c).

As we indicated in the beginning of this section, freedom for Thomas is situated within a context of nature and necessity: "The starting point of all our willing is the will's natural inclination; but this is strictly towards something corresponding to the nature of the subject willing" (S.T. I, 62, 2c).

Freedom of the Will

Having presented Thomas's views on necessary movements of the will, we now turn to consider his notion of free choice, which he speaks of as *liberum arbitrium*. We should note that he does not speak of freedom of the will or *libera voluntas*. Free choice is proper to intellectual beings: "It is natural for intelligent beings to move freely to what they aim at" (S.T. I, 62, 3 *ad* 2). It produces in creatures that have it a control over what they are and what they do: "What makes a man master of himself is having free will. He may accordingly manage his life in respect of all those things which go to make up this life, and this is the province of his free will" (S.T. II-II, 64, 5 *ad* 3). "Free decision spells self-determination (causa sui motus) because man by his free decision moves himself into action" (S.T. I, 83, 1 ad 3). Of course, for Thomas, man does so only in a world in which God is the first and universal mover, "the first cause on which both natural and free agents depend" (Ibid.). However, because God's action respects the nature of his creatures, it "does not prevent voluntary action from being voluntary but rather makes it be precisely this" (Ibid.). According to Thomas, the reason why free choice is found in all and only intellectual beings is that only such beings can have a universal concept of good: "Only subjects endowed with intelligence can act with a free judgment, for only they can apprehend goodness in general and so can judge that either of two alternatives is good. Hence wherever intellect is found, there is free will" (S.T. I, 59, 4c). This text indicates what is for Thomas the fundamental cognitive precondition for the exercise of free choice, namely, the agent's possession of a universal idea or concept of good (ratio boni). But, as we have already seen, the will is drawn to good in general as this is presented to it by the intellect by a necessary movement, which Thomas speaks of as a natural inclination of the will not subject to our free choice (S.T. I, 83, 2c). As we shall presently indicate, the relation between free choice and natural inclinations is a matter on which Thomas says some puzzling things. But it is certainly clear that more is required for an account of free choice in human agents than the intellect's notion of good in general and the will's necessary movement to good in general.

The requirement that the agent with free choice must have a univeral idea of good does entail, according to Thomas, that brute animals, since they do not have such an idea of good, do not have free choice (S.T. I-II, 13, 2c). The sensitive appetites, which are common to both brute animals and men, are directed to particular goods and so do not, according to Thomas, involve free choice. Here we can point out that Thomas's line of argument does not prove as much as he thinks it does, because of an ambiguity in his terminology that has already been mentioned. For he draws the contrast between sensitive appetite and will in the following words:

> The difference between sensitive appetite and will has been stated: it is this, in the natural course of things the sensitive is moved determinately towards one particular object, whereas the will, though set on one common object, namely being good, has an indeterminacy with regard to any particular good (S.T. I-II, 13, 2c).

The object of a sensitive appetite is, however, not a particular good, but rather a specific good (e.g., food, sexual intercourse) which can be found in many particular things. So this argument gives us no reason to think that the sensitive appetite of an animal is determined to one particular thing in a way that rules out all spontaneous self-determination by an individual animal with regard to particular goods falling under a specific good to which its sensitive appetite is inclined. It also ignores the fact that even a brute animal has natural inclinations to a number of different specific goods. But, if we grant Thomas the claim that animals do not have a universal notion of good, we must also grant they cannot engage in the activities of deliberating and choosing as he describes them.

Free choice, then, for Thomas, is confined to those beings that have intellects and that, therefore, also have wills: "The will is the root of freedom, for that is where freedom lies (_radix libertatis est voluntas sicut subjectum_)" (_S.T._ I-II, 17, 1 _ad_ 2). Free choice is not a separate power of the soul, but is found in the will. The Latin term _liberum arbitrium_, as Thomas uses it, designates both an act and a power: "A power is usually named from its act. And so from the act of free decision (_liberum arbitrium_) we name the power from which this act comes. Otherwise, if free-will were an act, man would not always have it" (_S.T._ I, 83, 2 _ad_ 1). But the power of freely choosing or deciding is not different from the power of willing, though the acts of choosing and of willing an end are different acts (_S.T._ I, 83, 4 _ad_ 2). The parallel that Thomas draws to illustrate this last point is to the twofold activity of the intellect, which, while being only one power, both understands and reasons (_S.T._ I, 83, 4c; see _S.T._ I, 79, 8c). Free choice, like the other acts of the will, involves immunity from coercion, a freedom that Thomas holds is natural to man and is not forfeited by sin (_S.T._ I, 83, 2 _ad_ 3). In one sense, free choice is indifferent with regard to good and evil, both moral and non-moral. Thus Thomas holds that free choice is not a habit, since "habit is defined as that by which we hold ourselves well or ill in regard to passions or actions, as the _Ethics_ says" (_S.T._ I, 83, 2c).[8] Thomas then goes on to say: "Now freedom is determined (indifferenter se habet) neither towards good nor towards evil" (Ibid.). Unlike the virtues and the vices, freedom is not evaluatively marked, and it is compatible with the possibility of error and sin. The indifference of free choice is such that the fact that a given human or angelic act is directed to evil, whether it be moral or non-moral, does not show that the act is not freely chosen or does not proceed from free choice; whereas a bad act could not proceed from a virtue, nor a good act from a vice. We should, however, bear in mind that free choice is an act of a power or faculty, the will, that is directed to good in general. Within the framework of Thomistic psychology, one could draw a parallel between the will's direction to good and its ability to choose evil and the intellect's direction to truth and its ability to judge erroneously. The indifference of free choice in this life is an exceptional and even anomalous element in Thomas's system as a whole. Bourke holds that "the theory of liberty of indifference does not appear in St. Thomas's works," though he admits that Thomas's thought could be developed in this way.[9]

Though the possibility of sin can serve as evidence for the freedom of the agent, the possibility of sin is not required for the fullness of perfection of liberty. Thomas says:

> The case of the will is similar. That it can choose between alternative means while respecting the order imposed by ends, this is what its freedom -- the fulness of its freedom (perfectionem libertatis) -- signifies. But should it make a choice at variance with that order -- that is to say, commit a sin -- it would fall short of its own capacity for freedom (defectum libertatis). Freedom of choice (libertas arbitrii),

> then, is greater in the angels who cannot sin than in us who can" (S.T. I, 62, 8 ad 3).

In this passage Thomas complicates matters somewhat by bringing in a notion of liberty that derives from St. Augustine, who, Gilson tells us, distinguished "between man's free choice, the evil use of which does not destroy nature, and liberty, which is the good use of free choice."[10] In this Augustinian line of thought, the notion of liberty is evaluatively marked so that it excludes the possibility of doing wrong, at least moral wrong: a wrong act freely done is an exercise of free choice, but not of liberty. The Augustinian distinction between free choice and liberty is not incompatible with Thomas's view that free choice is indifferent to good and evil, since Thomas's notion of free choice is really one half of the antithesis that Augustine establishes between free choice and liberty.

It seems to be a concern with preserving the indifference of free choice that lies behind the somewhat puzzling remarks that Thomas makes about the relations between free choice and natural inclinations. As we have already seen, Thomas holds that free choice is natural to man and to all intellectual beings (S.T. I, 62, 3 ad 2; I, 83, 2c). He argues that it cannot be a natural habit on the following lines:

> We have no natural habit touching the things that come for free decision. For a natural habit is a natural tendency, like our assent to self-evident principles, and as we said, regarding the desire for happiness, matters of natural tendency are not subject to free will (S.T. I, 83, 2c).

In commenting on this text, we do not wish to argue that free choice is a natural habit, since Thomas's other line of argument to show that it is not a habit seems acceptable to us; but the argument offered here might lead one to think that Thomas is adopting a view that makes natural inclination and liberty incompatible and mutually exclusive. We would call attention to the need to restrict what Thomas says here about natural inclinations to the natural and necessary inclinations to general goods that have previously been discussed. For, if we consider the whole range of natural inclinations, it seems clear that a person is free to pursue the objects of these inclinations or not. If, as Thomas thinks, there is a natural inclination to self-preservation, a person is still free to court martyrdom or to commit suicide. Similarly, with regard to the objects of the various human powers. A person is free to take actions that are directly or indirectly contrary to natural inclinations to specific goods. Secondly, we should note that, for Thomas, the presence of a natural inclination, even in an especially high degree, does not impose necessity on the agent in any way that negates the freedom of the agent, as the following example shows: "However great the highest angel's inclination towards goodness, it imposed no necessity on him; being endowed with free will, he was able not to follow it" (S.T. I, 63, 7 ad 3). Certainly, in what he says about human agents, Thomas does not want to imply that the presence of various natural inclinations that are common to human agents (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c) is in any way incompatible with these agents being free. We can recall here what we said earlier about distinguishing two concepts of the will in Thomas's overall account of the will, namely, will as intellectual appetite and will as power of decision. Will as intellectual appetite is related to its objects or to the things that are goods for it by natural inclinations, some of which, namely, those directed to general goods, involve necessary movements of the will. Free choice, on the other hand, clearly belongs to the will as power of decision, which can move in accordance with or contrary to those natural inclinations that do not involve necessary movements of the will. Will understood in this second way is not a natural inclination or a habit which involves a natural inclination to a specific range of goods.

Choice

We can now begin to consider Thomas's notion of choice (electio), which is the central and defining act of the free will; as he tersely puts the matter, "Free will (liberum arbitrium) is simply a power of choice (vis electiva) (S.T. I, 83, 4c). He expands this a bit in saying: "Choice (electio) is the distinguishing mark of free decision. For we are said to be free in a decision when we can adopt one course and reject another: this is to choose. And so the nature of free decision has to be considered in terms of choice" (S.T. I, 83, 3c). What the will's power of free choice is has to be understood in terms of the act of choosing. The act of choosing, as Thomas envisions it, involves alternatives, though these may not be different things or actions to be chosen but may, in some cases, be the doing and the not-doing of one action. He observes that choice involves and presupposes comparison (collationem) of alternatives; but he holds that it is not essentially such a comparison; for, if it were, then it would be an act of reason rather than of will (S.T. I-II, 13, 1 ad 1).

Thomas holds that our choices are always of actions: "Our choices always concern our own actions" (S.T. I-II, 13, 5c).[11] The action to be chosen is always a means to an end (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c), a claim that will be examined shortly. But, just as the end can be considered as the thing aimed at or as the activity by which we attain it, so the means that we choose "can be treated as a thing or as the intervening action which produces it or accomplishes the deed" (S.T. I-II, 13, 4c). So Thomas recognizes that we often speak of choosing a thing rather than of choosing to perform a certain action. But he holds that "when we speak of one thing being chosen in preference to another, it involves some action on the part of the chooser" (S.T. I-II, 13, 4 ad 2). His view seems to be that for every sentence of the form "I choose X," a fuller and more precise sentence of the form "I choose to do something with regard to X" can be substituted for the original sentence. Thus, "a man who chooses (eligit) a bishop or a ruler of a state, chooses to nominate (eligit nominare) someone for the office" (S.T. I-II, 13, 4 ad 2).[12] It is important to bear in mind that Thomas here is not offering a comprehensive account of what is involved in our preferring one thing to another. Thus one might desire or wish for one state of affairs rather than another, e.g., a clear day rather than a cloudy one; or one might enjoy one event more than another, e.g., Nixon's resignation rather than his re-election. But neither of these preferences would be a choice of one over the other in a way that involves a decision for action on one's own part. Furthermore, we should recall that Thomas views choice not simply as a preference for one state of affairs over another, but as a moment or element in the whole complex process of performing a human act as he lays this out in _S.T._ I-II, 6-17.

Choice bears a special relation to one other moment or element in that process, namely, the judgment of reason (_judicium_) about what is to be done, which terminates the process of deliberation (_consilium_). The two acts of choice and judgment are very closely linked in Thomas's thought, though they remain distinct, at least logically, since the judgment of reason is the act of a cognitive or apprehensive power, whereas choice is the act of an appetitive power (_S.T._ I, 83, 3c). It is the two acts together that complete the process of deliberation about alternatives: "Judgment is the conclusion of the counselling process (_consilium_). The course to be taken is determined first by a proposition (_sententiam_) of reason, second by its acceptance by appetite" (_S.T._ I, 83, 3 _ad_ 2). It is by distinguishing between judgment and choice that Thomas resolves Aristotle's hesitation as to whether choice is "desiderative reason or ratiocinative desire"[13] in favor of choice's being an act of desire or appetite.[14] The distinction and interrelationship of judgment and choice exemplifies the general relationship that Thomas establishes between intellect or

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reason and will:

> It is clear that reason comes before will and directs its activity in that the will tends toward its object in the setting of reason, which presents to it the object of desire. Accordingly then, that will-act which turns towards an object proposed to it as being good, that is, as being reasonably subordinate to the end, is 'materially' one of will, but 'formally' one of reason. . . .In this sense, choice is substantially an act of will, not of reason, wrought in a certain going out of the soul to a good which is preferred, clearly an act of appetitive power (S.T. I-II, 13, 1c).

Here we should notice, as we did earlier in considering the way in which the intellect generally presents its object to the will, that, in this specific situation of the choice of means, the object is presented as good by the intellect prior to the activity of the will or appetite in choosing it.

Choice is related to judgment as a consequence: "Choice follows the decision or verdict, which, as it were, is a conclusion to a practical syllogism. It is this which offers the object of choice" (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c; see S.T. I-II, 13, 1 ad 2). Choice remains distinct from judgment, because it is directed from the person to things and so belongs to the appetitive powers, even though Thomas sometimes speaks of choice in the same syllogistic terminology that strictly applies to the judgment that precedes it.[15] Thomas indicates the form of the judgment preceding choice in the following terms: "But man acts through judging that something is to be shunned or sought after through his ability to know" (S.T. I, 83, 1c). The judgment preceding choice is cast in the same gerundive form that is used in enunciating the first precept of the natural law: "Good is to be sought and done, evil to be avoided" (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c). This grammatical form brings it closer to statements of necessity and obligation and to commands than to declarations of intent or statements of fact. Unlike that first principle, however, the judgment of choice in a particular situation is not a necessary truth based on the meaning of good (rationem boni), but is contingent in character. Thomas says:

> Because this particular practical conclusion proceeds not from natural instinct but from reasoning from experience (collatione rationis), he acts freely, being open to several possible courses. For, in contingent matters reason can go either way, as is obvious in dialectical and rhetorical arguments. Now particular actions are contingent. And so in regard to particular acts reason's judgment is open to various possibilities, not fixed to one. It is because man is rational that such decisions must needs be free (S.T. I, 83, 1c).

Thomas's argument here seems to be that since no judgment about a particular thing to be done by us is a necessary truth, assent to which is necessary once its meaning is understood, then the choice that follows on this judgment is free.

Assessment of this line of argument must, to some extent, depend on consideration of what Thomas says about the plurality of ways in which a thing can be considered and the function of attention to the goodness of a particular thing in arriving at a choice, as well as on a more detailed discussion of Thomas's account of practical reasoning than can be given here. Nonetheless several points should at least be raised here. First, if the judgment preceding choice does not express a necessary truth and so can be denied without self-contradiction, the freedom that is involved in accepting or rejecting a particular judgment of this type is found in an act of intellect rather than in an act of will. It is not clear whether Thomas's argument is that the will is free because the intellect is free or whether the freedom found in this intellectual act of judgment is to be accounted for by the activity of the will freely accepting a given belief or judgment. Second, even if we grant that the judgment preceding choice is undetermined and in some way free, it does not seem that this is by itself sufficient to settle the question of the freedom of the will's activity. From what is said here, we do not know whether, in Thomas's view, the will is really free to go against the practical judgment of the intellect or whether it is bound to conform to this practical judgment and its freedom is then nothing more than the freedom of the judgment which precedes its choice. We shall see that there are strong reasons for adopting the first alternative. Third, we should realize that one of the things that Thomas has to account for in his general theory of the activity of the will is the diversity of human choices. This is a problem for him, irrespective of whether the choices are made freely or not. For it is Thomas's view that all people share both the necessary inclinations of the will to the general goods (beatitude, last end, good in general) and the various inclinations to the specific goods that are objects of the faculties that all men possess. Yet it is obvious that human beings do not opt for the same goods or even for similar goods. Thomas, of course, was familiar with the Greek discussion of the comparative merits of different ways of life directed to different goods, at least as this is found in Nicomachean Ethics I. 5. It might be possible to account for this diversity by proposing a complex causal network, perhaps psychological, perhaps social; and there are traces of this sort of explanation in some of the things that Thomas says about the influence of a person's physical condition on his activities and decisions.[16] There is also the essentially causal influence of habits and previous decisions on present choices. But the principal part of the burden of accounting for the diversity of human choices in Thomas's system falls not on antecedent causes outside the agents but on the free choices of the agents themselves. We must, then, look more closely at Thomas's views on just how the will functions in making free choices.

We have already seen that, for Thomas, choice is of actions to be done by us and that it is preceded by a particular practical judgment as to what is to be done. A further important point is that choice is not of end, but is always of means (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c). Here Thomas follows a dictum of Aristotle: "Wish relates to the end, choice to the means."[17] Like Aristotle, Thomas also holds that deliberation, which is terminated by the particular practical judgment, is about means and not about ends (S.T. I-II, 14, 3c); and this, for Thomas, provides the reason why choice can only be about means. The claim that choice is only of means is an important one for Thomas for two reasons: first, it prepares the way for his claim that there is for the human agent one and only one ultimate end, which is not subject to choice by the agent; second, it enables him to fit choice into his scheme for explaining the activity of the will in terms of actuality and potentiality. The claim that choice is only of means should not, however, be misunderstood. For it might readily be taken to mean that we do not make choices of things or actions that we consider good or valuable in themselves, and this would clearly be false. Now for Thomas the only thing that is not subject to deliberation and choice is the last end. He says this quite clearly:

> What is an end for one operation may itself be a means for another, and so it becomes an object of choice. For instance, medical health is the end for a doctor, and as such this for him is a settled principle, not an open question. Medical health, however, is subordinate to spiritual health, and consequently for one charged with the cure of souls health or sickness may be a matter of choice. . . The last end, however, is in no way a matter of choice (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c).

Similarly, the activity of deliberation is always about means, but what counts as a means varies with the context of deliberation, and the end that is presupposed in deliberation: "Consequently the end assumed in one matter for inquiry may be treated as a means in another and consequently will be deliberated about" (S.T. I-II, 14, 2c). The end-means relationship provides a framework in which the constituent elements are variable, depending on the interests and intentions of the agent and on what end he has in view.

At one point, it is true, Thomas does allow that there is deliberation about the end, when he speaks of a person "having apprehended and deliberating about an end and the steps to be taken"

(S.T. I-II, 6, 2c). But, of course, any reasonable person deliberating about means will have to consider the nature and characteristics of the end that he has in view; and so in some sense he will also be deliberating about the end, though not about whether the end is to be desired or aimed at or about what end is to be desired. In most cases this end has been adopted in a previous choice; the one end that is not and has not been the object of choice, according to Thomas, is the last end, happiness or beatitude. Even the virtues, Thomas says, are means to this end; and so they can be chosen (S.T. I-II, 13, 3 ad 1). Wherever we are confronted by a choice between two or more alternatives, which we might be inclined to describe as competing or alternative goals or values or objectives, it is Thomas's view that these, because they are matter for choice, are in effect serving as means to a further end. He says, "There is but one last end. There can be choice with respect to other ends which confront us inasmuch as they are ordained to a further end" (S.T. I-II, 13, 3 ad 2).

Some of the objections to this view will be considered in our appraisal of Thomas's doctrine on beatitude and the last end of man. But, in this present explication of Thomas's notion of choice, we should observe that the limitation of the range of choice to means accords with Thomas's view that man's direction to his last end or beatitude is a natural and necessary inclination of the will and is not a free choice between alternatives. We should also note that while, in Thomas's concept of choice, every choice is of means, not every act of the will dealing with means is a choice, but only those acts that involve alternatives: "Not every appetition of something on account of an end is called choice, but that only which goes with a discrimination between one thing and another. This has no place except where desire can go out to several things" (S.T. I-II, 13, 2 ad 1). Thomas here adopts the view that in situations where the end is willed and where there is and is known to be only one means to the end, then the will cannot properly be said to choose the means. This shows that the claim that choice is between alternatives is more fundamental in his account of the notion of choice than the claim that choice is of means. It also shows that, while for Thomas determination to one thing is compatible with the activity of the will, it is not compatible with choice, which is one kind of activity of the will.

Since choice is directed to actions and to means to an end, it is always concerned with particular goods (S.T. I-II, 13, 6c). Since actions, according to Thomas, are always singular, done here and now under individual conditions (S.T. I-II, 6, 6c), the goods present and attainable in the actions which are the objects of choice are always particular goods. With regard to all particular goods, Thomas holds, the will is indeterminate; its necessary inclinations are only to universal or general goods. He says:

> Now since the will, like the mind, is a non-material force, there corresponds to mind one common reality, namely being true and being real and so forth. This universal good embraces many particular goods, towards none of which is there a determinism within the will (S.T. I-II, 10, 1 ad 3).

As we shall see more fully, it is this indeterminacy that makes freedom possible according to Thomas: "The will, though set on one common object, namely being good, has an indeterminacy with regard to any particular good. Consequently the quality of being able to choose is peculiar to the will" (S.T. I-II, 13, 2c). It is the singular character of the actions among which choice is to be made that produces uncertainty and requires deliberation or counsel: "The field of practice is attended with much uncertainty, for our acts are engaged with contingent individual cases, which offer no fixed and certain points because they are so variable" (S.T. I-II, 14, 1c). Since the function of deliberation is to guide choice, the subject matter of deliberation is really the same as the subject matter of choice:

> The taking of counsel, properly speaking, is concerned with individual contingencies. In such matters knowing the truth is not so lofty as to be desirable in itself, like the knowledge of universal and necessary truth; it is desired as being serviceable for action, for action bears on contingent and individual issues (S.T. I-II, 14, 3c).

Here we touch on a Thomistic theme, the limits of our knowledge in particular cases, that has been widely used in recent discussions, especially in the efforts to determine whether Thomas really held that there are exceptionless moral rules and to find a Thomistic basis for a kind of situation ethics.[18] We should be careful, however, not to confuse the limits that Thomas finds in our knowledge of particular cases with the indeterminacy of the will with regard to particular goods, even though Thomas's insistence on the intimate collaboration between intellect and will in the act of choice and his use of a syllogistic model for the act of choice may sometimes make such a confusion tempting.

Here we consider briefly what the indeterminacy that Thomas claims for the will with regard to particular goods amounts to. Thomas is not really asserting that the will is immune to causal influences outside itself, though he comes close to doing so in such passages as S.T. I, 83, 1 ad 5, and S.T. I-II, 9, 6c. But he is basing his argument on a notion of the will as intellectual appetite. He holds that the will has a necessary and natural inclination to the object proper to it, namely good in general, but that it does not have such an inclination with regard to particular goods that fall under that universal object. What his line of thought shows is that the will, conceived as intellectual appetite, is not determined to particular goods by reason of its own nature; some further explanation is required for its willing of particular goods. In some cases, indeed, the explanation of a human person's willing a determinate good brings in the activity of a being other than the person willing: "Sometimes God moves us to will a determinate good as when he quickens us by his grace" (S.T. I-II, 9, 6 ad 3). The need for a further account of the choice of particular goods either in terms of the will's own particular acts or in terms of determining causal influences should be obvious; and we should bear in mind that the natural indeterminacy of the will with regard to particular goods does not by itself establish the freedom of the will.

We do in fact find that Thomas gives a further account of the will's choice of a particular good in S.T. I-II, 10, 2c. Here he begins by drawing a distinction between freedom of exercise and freedom of specification in the will's activity:

> The will's motion can be looked at first with respect to the exercise of its activity, and second with respect to the kind of act in question (specificationem actus),[19] which comes from the object it engages. As to the first no object necessitates the will; whatever it is a man always has the power not to think about it, and consequently not to will it. As to the second, however, the will is necessitated, but not by every object (S.T. I-II, 10, 2c).

In this passage, Thomas implies that the basic way that a person has of controlling his activity is to control his thoughts. If one ceases to think of X at all, one will of course cease to think of X as desirable or good; and one's appetite or will will no longer be drawn to it. In this passage it is clear that Thomas wants what he says about the will's freedom to hold for all particular goods which could be objects of will; it is less clear whether it holds for such an object as good in general, since even a choice not to think about it is, on Thomas's account of the will, made because not thinking about it is thought to be an instance of it. (This is a point that applies to cases where one decides not to think about good in general, not where one simply fails to do so). But the main interest of his discussion lies in what he says about freedom of specification:

> Being good is the object of will. Accordingly, if the will be offered an object universally good and good from every point of view (secundum omnem considerationem), then it will respond to it of necessity, that is, if it wills anything at all. It cannot will the opposite. But if the object offered is good, but not good from every point of view, then it will not go out to it of necessity. Now because any lack of a good[20] is a non-good (habet rationem non boni) that good alone which is complete and which lacks for nothing at

> all is that object which the will is unable not to want. And this is beatitude. All other particular goods whatever, in so far as they fall short of some good, can strike us as not good on this head, and the will can refuse them or accept them as the case may be, for it is able to respond to one and the same object from different points of view (secundum diversas considerationes) (S.T. I-II, 10, 2c).

Much of what Thomas says here is already familiar from our examination of his views on the objects of the natural and necessary inclinations of the will. What he says about beatitude and about God as the object of human beatitude will be considered later. But what is important and distinctive in his account of the free activity of the will is what he says about the will's relation to particular goods.

Thomas offers a similar account of the will's relation to particular goods a bit farther on in the Summa, an account which puts explicit emphasis on the prior activity of the intellect in presenting the object to the will:

> Whatever the reason can apprehend as good to that the will can stretch out. Now the reason can apprehend as good, not only willing and acting, but also not willing and not acting. Again in any particular good it can attend to the goodness there, but also to the lack of some goodness (defectum alicujus boni); this has the nature of an evil (rationem mali). Accordingly the reason can apprehend it as something to be sought or something to be avoided. The perfect good alone, which is beatitude, cannot be apprehended under the aspect of evil or as displaying any defect (S.T. I-II, 13, 6c).

Here, in Thomas's second and third sentences, we recognize in more compressed form the distinction between exercise and specification of the will's activity. We also see once again the prior activity of the intellect in judging the goodness of the object in question before the will can go out to it. But what is new in these two passages is the mention of a plurality of points of view from which the judgment about a thing's goodness can be made. "Point of view" is perhaps not the right translation for Thomas's consideratio; for something less definite and less systematic is involved than when contemporary philosophers speak of "the moral point of view."[21] What is actually involved in the notion of consideratio as it is used here (and we should bear in mind that it is neither a technical term nor a basic category for Thomas) seems to be a reflective awareness of the object in relation to the agent's desires and interests, which enables the agent to find reasons why the action or object in question is good or is not good. Thomas's argument presupposes that, in the case of any particular good that the agent encounters, there will be desires and interests of his that the particular good in question does not satisfy. The agent then has a reason for rejecting the particular good in question. The presence of such a reason makes the activity of the will different from mere attraction and aversion of one thing to another; it is part of what is involved in Thomas's claim that the will is a rational appetite. In effect, the proposal that Thomas makes here transfers the field of choice from object or actions to be chosen to reasons for action. It does not tell us what reasons or even what kinds of reasons will prevail and so determine the will to choose one particular good rather than another, or what determines the will to choose one reason rather than another. It leaves open the possibility of the influence of known or unknown causes that determine the agent's decision, and so it cannot serve as a demonstration of the will's freedom of choice. It may still leave freedom of exercise, as D. J. O'Connor puts it, "in the last resort, unexplained and opaque to reason."[22]

Nonetheless Thomas's introduction of the notion of consideration into his account of choice brings in an element that is required if he is to give an account of how the will becomes determinate while maintaining his doctrine that will is a rational appetite for good and that all free choices are of good. For, without the notion of consideration as Thomas employs it, it would seem that the will as rational appetite must be directed to what the intellect presents to it as the most valuable good available to it in the particular situation of choice. Furthermore, the notion of consideration points to two important aspects of most human choices of the lesser good or of the morally wrong. The first is that, while such choices can rightly be regarded as irrational, the agent still usually has a reason for his choice and his action, since these lead to at least some good which he has in mind and desires, even though this good is a lesser good or a non-moral good. The choice, though irrational, is being made by a rational agent who chooses and acts in accordance with reasons of his own. The second is the connection between attention and decision. The intellect, as Thomas points out, can "in any particular good . . . attend to the goodness there, but also to the lack of some goodness" (S.T. I-II, 13, 6c). In deciding for X over Y, the intellect directs its attention to the goodness present in X and the lack of goodness in Y. Adverting to the goodness in

Y and the lack of goodness in X provides a reason for choosing Y over X and is liable to be the beginning of a reversal of the decision or to produce indecisiveness in the agent. One of the most effective ways to ensure perseverance in a decision is to exclude consideration of the goodness present in alternatives as well as consideration of the lack of goodness present in the course adopted. In making up one's mind, one comes to focus on the reasons for choosing one course of action, reasons which are drawn from its goodness and the lack of goodness in the alternatives; in adhering to one's decision one continues to focus on these reasons. Such a procedure also minimizes the painful character of difficult choices, in which one can be only too acutely aware of the goodness that is being surrendered for the sake of the chosen alternative. A further merit of Thomas's notion of consideration is that his use of it shows awareness of the real attractiveness and goodness of diverse and frequently incompatible courses of action for human agents with their characteristic mixture of interests, inclinations, and motives. The human agent in the circumstances of this life is normally able to lean now this way, now that, in endeavoring to satisfy these divergent interests and inclinations; but it is normally the case that each decision among competing goods involves loss as well as gain, the sacrifice of real goods as well as their attainment. The plurality of considerations possible in a given situation indicates the presence of a gap between any particular good and the satisfaction of our diverse interests and inclinations taken as a whole. The existence of this gap allows both for the possibility of free choice and the restlessness of the human heart and its desires.

In the consideration of a particular good, as Thomas describes it, the intellect can "attend to the goodness there, but also to the lack of some goodness; this has the nature of an evil" (S.T. I-II, 13, 6c). This may strike us as imposing too strict a requirement on particular finite goods. Even if a particular good fails to meet some extraneous standard of goodness or a further demand of appetite, it is still good. An apple pie may be good even if it is not an act of justice or a landscape by Cezanne. Also, Thomas himself says that evil is not simply the absence of any good, but the lack of a good which the thing in question ought naturally to have (S.T. I, 48, 3c). Thomas's manner of speaking in the other passage under consideration (S.T. I-II, 10, 2c) is more accurate when he says that "any lack of a good is a non-good," that is, a negation rather than a privation, such as he holds evil to be. The point is that if a certain kind of goodness is absent from a thing, then there is also lacking the correlative reason for choosing or desiring the thing. The thing, because it lacks a certain kind of goodness, which may be foreign to its nature, does not thereby become evil; but for the purposes of the agent there is not then reason for choosing it, and so it is considered as not good.

Objections to Thomas's Account of Choice

D. J. O'Connor offers the following objections to Thomas's conclusion that because the intellect can regard a particular good as a non-good, the will is free to reject it:

> St. Thomas' conclusion seems to follow only if we interpret 'good' in its metaphysical sense. If we take the word in its everyday meaning, it is surely false that all 'finite' goods, that is, all that we are acquainted with in this life, may be regarded as not being good. Suppose, for example, a man with every wish to live who is dying of thirst in a dessert. He is rescued and offered water, of which his rescuers have an abundance. How could the water possibly be regarded by him as not being a good? It is no doubt a finite good; but it is, in the circumstances, exactly what he needs and desires. And the case is similar with many (though perhaps not all) of the goods that we strive after in our everyday lives. [23]

This criticism is confused on several counts. First, it is not clear whether O'Connor means to assert that a man dying of thirst could not refuse the water; it is, of course, obvious that he would be very unlikely to do so. He would almost certainly regard the water as a good; and in the situation as described he is very unlikely to think of the water as a non-good; but he need not regard it as the only good in his situation. We could tell a slightly different story: suppose that the man has his wife or child with him and finds that there is only enough water for one of them to drink with any realistic hope of survival. Then we would have a situation with competing and exclusive goods; and we can imagine that the man might be willing to give up the good present in the water as a means to the preservation of his life for the good present in the water as a means to the preservation of the life of his wife or child (to which can be added the good present in the renunciation of the water as an expression of his love). Drinking the water, then, is a course of action that has some goodness but that also lacks other goodness; and the thirsty man can know this and act on his knowledge. Second, without explicitly saying so, O'Connor aims at sketching a situation in which there will be no real or momentous option. For the situation he proposes is one in which the dying man has one end clearly in view (the preservation of his life) and is offered one means that is conducive to this end and that imposes no significant costs. The situation of choice is one that involves alternatives; but O'Connor has designed his case so that there is no plausible alternative available and so there is no need of choice.[24] Third, it is possible that O'Connor means to suggest that the man could refuse the water, even though he in no way regarded his drinking the water as a non-good. We would then have a case of the irrational rejection of a known good. Thomas denied that such cases can occur; we shall have occasion to examine his views on this topic in considering the question of the free choice of evil. But if this is the point that O'Connor wishes to make, he has certainly put it in a puzzling way. What O'Connor says about this case is of some use in suggesting that normally the human agent, in the course of his voluntary activity, does not go through a careful process of weighing alternatives with their advantages and disadvantages, and so does not often come to think of particular goods in the way that involves what Thomas calls consideration. But this in no way shows that Thomas's notion of consideration is at variance with known facts about our deliberations and choices.

O'Connor has some more general objections to Thomas's account of how the will as a rational appetite can be free. Consideration of these can shed light both on Thomas's conception of freedom and on his views of the working of practical reason. The first of these objections is that rationality does not entail freedom. This runs against Thomas's claim that all intellectual and rational beings are free because they are intellectual and rational. O'Connor argues thus:

> When a rational man considers the premises of an argument, he does so with the intention of drawing the correct conclusion from them. And his ability to do so does not depend on the question: Is he free in doing so? 'Free' here can only mean 'free to be right or wrong.' And as a rational man, he wants only to be right. Thus to link freedom of choice with 'the free judgment of reason' is a mistake. The experience of computers shows that where to be rational is to be guided by the evidence, rationality does not require freedom. Being constrained by the evidence and by the rules of logic is what is meant by being rational in such contexts. Freedom would simply be freedom to be wrong.[25]

Behind this objection is the view that the operation of computers provides the paradigm case of rationality, in which rationality is equated with the ability to produce valid arguments. Now we do not doubt that computers could be programmed to produce valid practical arguments; but this is different from saying that they could produce particular judgments of choice, that is, judgments that some one thing is to be done in this situation or that one course of action is to be adopted. Let us leave aside any difficulties that may be involved in a computer's gathering evidence for judgments on the factual aspects of a situation which presents an agent with an opportunity for choice. If we grant the computer all the relevant factual information and the ability to produce valid arguments and if we then provide it with practical premises on the lines proposed by Aristotle (e.g., "All sweet things are to be tasted."),[26] it seems that the computer (or a similarly endowed human agent) will then give us a plurality of practical conclusions, some of which may be at variance with each other. In order to get beyond these to a particular judgment of choice, we must also supply the computer with a set of rules that will regulate any such conflicts that may arise. If we could do this, we would be programming into the computer a complete policy for dealing with all the envisaged contingencies of life. Setting up such a set of rules would involve us in ranking the various ends to be attained and the means to be used in attaining them. But in establishing our set of rules we would be making a series of judgments not directly about what is to be done, but rather about what premises are to be adopted for determining what is to be done. The locus of free judgment and choice would have been changed; but the acts themselves would remain, since we would be in the position of making particular judgments and choices about general rules to be adopted. We would then have a powerful instrument for arriving at particular practical judgments of choice, but nothing more than that.

The more fundamental difficulty that we have with O'Connor's objection, however, is that he adopts a notion of rationality that is quite different from Thomas's own and then argues that rationality as he understands it will not yield a satisfactory understanding of free choice. In the first place, reasoning or the movement from premises to conclusion is, for Thomas, an imperfect mode of cognition, inferior to intuitive understanding; it is found in human beings, but not in God or the angels (S.T. I, 14, 7c; I, 58, 3c).[27]

Secondly, as O'Connor uses it, rationality is a success term; thus the production of an invalid argument or of a mistake simply counts as irrationality. Now Thomas certainly does not think that men, whom he speaks of in Aristotelian terms as rational animals, are incapable of making mistakes in argument or of making wrong judgments of choice. So it is a mistake to ascribe to Thomas a purely formal understanding of rationality as the ability to produce valid arguments (quite aside from any question of an anachronistic comparison with computers). Also, it would, in Thomas's view, be quite possible for a human agent to arrive by formally correct arguments at conclusions that would be at variance with right reason; so the conclusion of formally correct arguments could well be wrong judgments of choice, e.g., all Americans should kill Russians; John is an American; John should kill Russians. Furthermore, the point of such practical reasoning and deliberation as the agent normally engages in is to come to a decision, not to arrive at the correct conclusion from a set of premises. What the agent wants is a choice or decision leading to activity that will satisfy at least one of his various interests and inclinations. This decision must usually be arrived at under the limitations of imperfect information and in the absence of the generous cognitive resources that we granted earlier to computers. Thus a human being, recognizing his cognitive limitations and knowing that he lacked sufficient knowledge to be sure of arriving at the correct judgment in a given situation, would not be irrational in deciding on the basis of the best information available to him, though he would not be justified in identifying the decision he reaches with the conclusion of a computer operating under the more generous cognitive conditions already mentioned or in some similar idealization of the actual conditions of choice. It is not the case, as O'Connor suggests, that a rational human being in such a situation "wants only to be right." In a sufficiently urgent situation, he may well want first to come to a decision, whatever that may be, and then to decide as well as he can under the actual circumstances.

O'Connor's third objection is in some ways close to his first, and so it will be more convenient for us to consider it before his second major objection. He writes:

> St. Thomas' theory seems to entail a consequence that he can hardly accept, namely, that when the rational considerations in favor of a course of action are perfectly complete and decisive and are seen to be so, we really have no choice as to whether we accept the course of action which they support. An act of will can terminate a state of indecision before all rational considerations have been evaluated. But then the act is only imperfectly rational. And if, as usually happens, the evidence for our choices fails to be rationally compulsive and is seen to fail, the act of choice is again imperfectly rational. Consider, for example, a paradigm case of rationality -- making moves in a game of chess. The further we see into the situation, the more rational our choice of move becomes: but the fewer are the rational alternatives open to us. Increasing rationality tends toward necessity. To replace causes by reasons as an explanation of human action is simply to replace a determinism of physical causes by a determinism of inexorable logic. And if the logic of the situation is not inexorable or is not seen to be so, our choices are capricious and irrational to the extent that they are not guided by reasons. And such a view singularly fails to account for the freedom of our moral choices; for moral reasons are never logically compelling.[28]

Much of what has just been said about the way in which O'Connor understands the notion of rationality applies to this objection also; but a more conclusive difficulty with it is that it rests on an almost complete misreading of Thomas's own position. For the consequence that Thomas "can hardly accept" is, in fact, one that he does accept, as we can see from what he says about the objects of the natural and necessary inclinations of man's will and about man's perfect happiness. For Thomas does believe that changing the cognitive conditions under which man's will is to operate does restrict the exercise of his freedom. Thus Thomas says in a text already cited:

> But other things have a necessary connection with happiness, those namely that join man to God in whom alone true happiness consists. Yet before the certitude enjoyed through seeing God proves the necessity of this link the will clings by necessity neither to God nor to the things of God. But the will of one who sees God's essence necessarily clings to God, just as even now we cannot help willing to be happy (S.T. I, 82, 2c).

Thomas would describe the cognitive change involved in man's advancing to the beatific vision of God's essence in terms of vision and understanding rather than in terms of increasing rationality. But the basic point remains the same: knowing without possibility of doubt or denial does decisively restrict the range of freedom. Thus Thomas says of those who enjoy the beatific vision: "Manifestly nobody could give up such brimming happiness of his own accord (propria voluntate) (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c). He also says that "rightness of will necessarily results from seeing him" (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c). It is also Thomas's view that the blessed angels are unable to sin:

> The blessed angels cannot sin, because their bliss consists in seeing God's very essence, which is goodness itself. Hence an angel seeing God stands in the same relation to him as one who does not see God stands in relation to the general motive of

> the good or desirable. Now it is not possible for anyone to will anything or to do anything except for the sake of some good, or willingly turn away from the good as such. Consequently a blessed angel can only will or do anything for God's sake; and to be so disposed is to be unable to sin; hence angels, once in bliss, simply cannot sin (S.T. I, 62, 8c).

We should, however, observe that Thomas does not deny the blessed angels all freedom of choice:

> And the case of the will is similar. That it can choose between alternative means while respecting the order imposed by ends, this is what its freedom -- the fulness of its freedom -- signifies. But should it make a choice at variance with that order -- that is to say, commit a sin -- it would fall short of its capacity for freedom. Freedom of choice, then, is greater in the angels who cannot sin than in us who can (S.T. I, 62, 8 ad 3).

And we may also recall that Thomas wishes to ascribe freedom of choice to God himself, who is omniscient (S.T. I, 19, 3c). For those who see God, "the rational considerations in favor of a course of action are perfectly complete and decisive and are seen to be so," at least in all matters that could involve sin; and so there is no longer a question of their freely turning away from good. But, of course, they are no longer under the same cognitive conditions as mortal human beings, though they are intellectual beings with wills. So we can see that Thomas's account of the will as rational appetite does incorporate much of O'Connor's line of argument.

Again, if the imperfect rationality of which O'Connor speaks consists in the failure or inability of the human agent to evaluate all rational considerations and in the absense of logi-

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cally compelling evidence for judgments of choice, Thomas would agree that human choices in this life are only imperfectly rational. In what, then, does the rationality of human choice consist, according to Thomas? Here Thomas offers a twofold answer. First, because human persons are capable of reasoning about their choices and of determining their choices in accordance with their knowledge and their beliefs, choice is at least a potentially rational activity. This aspect of the rationality of choice does not require that choice be always right or correct, whatever standards of rightness (prudential, moral, religious, etc.) may be proposed. Second, and here we come to a point that is characteristic of Thomas's whole account of the will and its objects; man, by virtue of being an intellectual and rational being, has an idea of universal good and is necessarily inclined to universal good. This makes the desire for and the movement to good that is present in every choice an expression of man's nature as a rational being, even though every choice need not be rational, whether it be judged by purely formal criteria or by substantive moral or prudential criteria. In Thomas's account of the will as rational appetite, freedom is neither equated with rationality nor ultimately incompatible with it, as in O'Connor's objection. In Thomas's view the possibility of free choice for human beings arises because of the gap between the idea of universal good, which is grasped by the human agent and is the object of a natural and necessary inclination of his will, and the particular finite goods that he encounters in his experience in this life. Once this gap is overcome by direct acquaintance with God, who is seen to be universal good, then it seems that there should be no further place for freedom. As we shall see, this is not exactly the case; but such a view does seem to be the conclusion of Thomas's main line of thought about the human will and its activity.

The reason for choosing some particular thing in this life, according to Thomas, must ultimately be that it is good (of its kind, for some purpose, in comparison with certain alternatives, in relation to some desire or appetite); but because of the limitations inherent in any particular created good, the reason for choosing a particular good cannot be logically compelling for an agent that both knows and desires universal good. Thomas is, we may suggest, committed to the view that there is no logical connection between a human agent's desiring universal good and his desiring a particular good. The connection is really made by the person's decision or choice, which is possible because the human person, unlike beings with merely natural or sensitive appetites and without the ability to grasp the notion of good, is not restricted to a particular good (S.T. I-II, 13, 2c). The free decision of the will in Thomas's account is not a purely rational activity, even though it can only occur in a being that can form universal ideas and can know universal truths.

O'Connor's second objection to Thomas's account of the will as rational appetite seems to us to have more merit, despite certain deficiencies in his formulation of it; and it will lead us to an important point about the limits of Thomas's account of the will. O'Connor argues:

> Since he holds that free choice is essentially a rational activity, Aquinas must presumably hold that impulsive motiveless choice would not be free; and conversely, the more that rational considerations enter into our choices, the freer they are. Freedom on this view, though he nowhere explicitly says so, must be a matter of degree. There is clearly an important truth behind this. Commonsense morality would endorse the view that some choices are more free and responsible than others and that calm and deliberate choices are freer than unthinking, impulsive ones. Nevertheless, it would surely be paradoxical, as we shall see, to maintain that choices are unfree if the goods between which we choose are indistinguishable in the view of reason. (Consider, for example, selecting a biscuit from a plate of identical biscuits.)[29]

One may quarrel with O'Connor's talk of "impulsive motiveless choice", since, as his example of the biscuits indicates, the kind of choice that he is concerned about is really a choice for which the agent is unable to supply a reason. Whether or not the choice is made on an impulse or is causally determined by an inner drive unknown to the agent, these being the two main ways in which we would understand "impulsive motiveless choice," is irrelevant to the main point at issue. One might be tempted to dismiss this objection of O'Connor's as trivial, since it seems to deal with cases in which there is no significant difference between alternatives or, more precisely, no significant difference known to the agent. But this would be mistaken. Surely, as O'Connor urges, we want to say that a situation in which the agent, when asked why he chose biscuit A rather than biscuit B or biscuit C, says, "Oh, there's no reason. I just decided to take A," is a situation of free choice. Presumably, the agent has or can offer a reason for taking a biscuit at all. The situation has, of course, been set up in such a way that the agent knows or at least judges that, since the alternatives are equivalent for all practical purposes, there is no need for him to have a reason for choosing one over the other. This offers one way of defending Thomas against O'Connor's objection. One could point out that the agent thinks that there is no need for him to have a reason for his choice of biscuit A and that Thomas's notion of the will as rational appetite does not commit him to the thesis that the agent must have a reason for each choice that he makes. It has already been pointed out that Thomas does not really equate the activity of the will with the activity of reason; nor, despite what O'Connor says about common-sense morality, is there any sign that he proposes to set up an exact parallelism between degrees of rationality and degrees of freedom, much less to identify freedom and rationality. Thomas does, after all, hold that there is real distinction between intellect and will (S.T. I, 78, lc: I, 80, lc). The agent in choosing a biscuit would be acting on his judgment that it is good for him to take a biscuit and on his judgment that there is no reason for taking one biscuit rather than another. His choice would still be the free choice of a rational agent, even though there would be no reason for taking biscuit A.

Though such a reply can be given to O'Connor's objection here, the objection itself points us to an important limitation of Thomas's general account of the will's activity. Thomas nearly always thinks of choice and the other activities of the will in a teleological framework. In fact, as we have seen, the different acts of the will are defined by their differing relations to ends and to means. Furthermore, Thomas's account of practical reasons is also teleological, since it takes the end as the first principle of practical reason. But the situation of choice without a reason that O'Connor proposes is one in which the content of the choice is not to be determined by teleological considerations, since in relation to the end there is ex hopothesi no difference among the various alternatives. This situation of choice among teleogically equal alternatives is similar to the situation of choice for those who have already attained the final end or beatitude or the vision of God as universal good. For here also, since the end is attained definitively and without possibility of loss (S.T. I, 5, 4c), the content of free choice is not determined by consideration drawn from the end to be attained; for the end is already attained, and everything that can be chosen is taken to be compatible with it. As we mentioned earlier, Thomas holds that the blessed, whether angels or men, cannot sin; but he does not deny that they can still choose freely (S.T. I, 62, 8 ad 3). Most importantly, there is also a similarity to the situation of choice for God, who possesses in himself the end of all his appetitive activity and yet who freely wills things other than himself (S.T. I, 19, 2c; I, 19, 3c). In all of these situations we move beyond the end-means framework for choice, either because the end is already attained or because the end makes no difference with regard to which means is to be chosen. We may notice that Thomas accordingly says very little about the choices of the blessed, except to affirm that they do

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not turn away from the end, and that he has considerable difficulty in adjusting his account of God's choices to his teleological framework.

Thus, in arguing for God's freedom in willing other things other than himself, Thomas says:

> Now God wills things other than himself in so far as they are set towards his goodness as unto their end. By willing an end we are not bound to will the things that lead to it, unless they are such that it cannot be attained without them (as when to preserve life we must take food or to cross the sea we must take a boat). Other things, however, without which the end can be attained, we do not will of necessity (thus a horse for a journey we can take on foot, and the same holds good in other cases). Hence, since God's goodness subsists and is complete independently of other things, and they add no fulfilment to him, there is no absolute need for him to will them. (S.T. I, 19, 3c).

Thomas here is trying to preserve God's freedom in creation by distinguishing means that are necessary to the attainment of an end and those that are not necessary to the attainment of the end. Now, in the example of the journey that he proposes, it is true that no one means is necessary; but clearly some means is necessary if the end is to be attained. One may choose to go by foot or by horse or by snowmobile or by some other mode of transportation; but if one does not choose any of the available means, then one does not get to one's goal. If God already has his end, namely, his own goodness, then he may do some things because he chooses to; but his choice of such things is not explained in any way by regarding them as means to an end, since the end is already fully attained. Thomas obscures this point by talking about God's being the end of the things that he wills (S.T. I, 19, 1 ad 1; I, 19, 2 ad 2); but this is to make a claim about the end or goal of various creatures, and not about God's end in willing things other than himself. One might get around this by maintaining that the end-means framework applies only analogously to God's choices; such a move would, in effect, grant the point being argued for here, namely, that the teleological framework itself does not yield a satisfactory account of choices in the situations we have mentioned. In fact, Thomas himself, perhaps sensing the inadequacy of the teleological framework, makes use in this connection of the neo-Platonic principle that good diffuses itself:

> A thing has a natural tendency towards its own good, to obtain it when it has not got it and to rest with it when it has, and also, so far as possible, to spread its own good to others. . . . If the things of nature when at their best share their good with others, much more is it the characteristic of God's will to share his goodness by making things as like to him as possible. (S.T. I, 19, 2c).

But this principle provides only the beginning for a possible account of non-teleological choices; it clearly stands in need of further specification and limitation so as to make it a principle governing free choices rather than a necessitarian axiom applicable to natural things devoid of intelligence and will. In ending consideration of this objection by O'Connor, we conclude that, while his original difficulty about "impulsive motiveless choices" can be resolved, Thomas's general account of free choice at least needs some supplementation if it is to apply to situations in which the content of choices does not depend on an end to be attained. It should be remembered that showing that Thomas's account of choice within a teleological framework does not apply to certain situations does not show that his account of choice in situations to which the teleological framework does apply is either correct or incorrect.

Footnotes to Chapter II

[1] Vernon Bourke, *Will in Western Thought*: *An Historico-Critical Survey* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964), p. 66.

[2] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* III. 1. 110a15-19.

[3] Bourke, p. 68.

[4] My translation.

[5] Gilby translates *sicut nunc* as "because then," referring to the situation of the blessed; this is unfaithful to the Latin text and destroys the parallel between the situation of the blessed and our situation that Thomas has in mind.

[6] See *S.T.* I, 82, 1c; I-II, 13, 3c; I-II, 72, 5c. Thomas derives this principle from Aristotle, *Physics* II. 9. 200a20.

[7] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IX. 8. 1049b23-26.

[8] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* II. 2. 1105b25.

[9] Bourke, p. 66.

[10] Etienne Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of *Saint Augustine*, trans. L. E. M. Lynch (New York: Random House, 1960), p. 323.

[11] See Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* III. 2. 1111b25.

[12] My translation.

[13] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VI. 2. 1139b4.

[14] We may point out that in at least one place (*S.T.* I, 59, 3c) Thomas speaks of free judgment (*libero judicio*), where the context and the argument would lead us to expect him to speak of free will or of free decision (*libero arbitrio*).

[15] See *S.T.* I, 62, 8 *ad* 3; I-II, 13, 5c.

[16] See *S.T.* I, 83, 1 *ad* 5; I-II, 77, 3c; I-II, 78, 3c.

[17] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics III. 2. 1111b27.

[18] For an overview of some recent theological discussions of this topic, see Charles E. Curran, "Present State of Moral Theology," Theological Studies 34 (1973), pp. 446-457. For an analysis of some of the relevant texts in Thomas, see John G. Milhaven, "Moral Absolutes and Thomas Aquinas," in Absolutes in Moral Theology, ed. Charles E. Curran (Washington: Corpus, 1968).

[19] Gilby here translates specificationem actus as "the meaning it holds." He may have mistaken specificationem for significationem; or he may be using "meaning" in a loose, colloquial fashion. In either case his translation here is inaccurate and unhelpful.

[20] I have omitted a "not" that Gilby inserted before "good."

[21] See Kurt Baier, The Moral Point of View: A Rational Basis for Ethics (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press), pp. 187-213.

[22] D. J. O'Connor, Aquinas and Natural Law (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 56.

[23] O'Connor, p. 51.

[24] See S.T. I-II, 13, 2 ad 1, where Thomas holds that choice involves alternatives.

[25] O'Connor, p. 52.

[26] Nicomachean Ethics VII. 3. 1147a30.

[27] See Etienne Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, tr. L. K. Shook, C.S.B. (New York: Random House, 1956), p. 211.

[28] O'Connor, p. 53; italics in original.

[29] O'Connor, pp. 52-53.

CHAPTER III

THE CHOICE OF EVIL AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SIN

The General Account of Sin

Our previous discussion of Thomas's account of will as a rational appetite in its activity of free choice has skirted around a paradox that must now be confronted. It is this: since Thomas holds that "willing is rational appetition, and there is no appetition except for a good" (S.T. I-II, 8, 1c), it seems that the will, however free it may be to choose among various goods, must choose something that falls under good, which is its object (S.T. I-II, 8, 1 *ad* 2), and so it cannot choose evil. Since the human will cannot choose evil, it cannot sin. But this conclusion is clearly false, for we know that human beings do voluntarily and freely perform wrong acts. It is also, we may add, an astonishing conclusion for a Christian theologian to propose. And, of course, we find that Thomas certainly does not propose or defend such a conclusion. But we may ask whether, given his understanding of the will and its activity, he is being timid or inconsistent in failing to do so. If his account of the will does not provide or allow for an account of our choice of what is evil or wrong, then this is a serious, indeed a fatal defect in it.

In examining how Thomas works out this paradox, we will begin by considering his notion of sin (peccatum). We will then examine his treatment of two different sorts of situations that involve the choice of what is evil: first, situations where the agent shows moral weakness (what Aristotle spoke of as akrasia); and second, situations where the agent chooses evil reflectively and in a cool hour, or, as Thomas says, from malice (malitia).

Thomas himself admits that, given his understanding of the will as a rational appetite, there is need for some more specific account of sin. "All things, man included, have a natural tendency to what is good. If, as a matter of fact, man does incline to what is evil, this presupposes some disorganization or deterioration in the very wellsprings of human action, just as it would when something goes wrong in nature" (S.T. I-II, 78, 1c; see S.T. I-II, 75, 1c). Sin is not the result of the normal working out of the principles inherent in things, but arises from some defect or failure in them. And so, in this sense, every sin is in some way contrary to nature. "Of its very nature the will seeks the good proposed by reason as its very own. And for this reason every sin is said to be contrary to nature" (S.T. I-II, 78, 3c).

But just what, according to Thomas, is sin? In the first place we should point out that sin is not, for Thomas, a purely theological category, though, of course, it is also that. Thus he says: "Theologians define sin as an act against God; moral philosophers define it as contrary to reason" (S.T. I-II, 71, 6 ad 5). Thomas's most succinct characterization of sin is: "Sin is nothing else but a bad human act" (S.T. I-II, 71, 6c). Actually, Thomas's notion of sin is somewhat wider than this, since he is willing to speak of sin (peccatum) occurring in nature. "In a failure of nature (peccato naturae) an act falls short indeed of the ultimate end, in this the completion (perfectio) of the thing that should be generated, yet not of some sort of proximate end, for nature is at work there forming something" (S.T. I-II, 21, 1c). Here Thomas seems to be thinking of deformed offspring or monsters as sins or failures of nature. But sin in such cases has, so far as we can see, no moral significance. Thomas's use of the notion in this way is simply an instance of his readiness to apply the language of agency to nature and natural things. As we have already seen in the first chapter, Thomas interprets the movements of physical things on the model of the activity of rational agents. He does not ascribe rationality to them, but he does apply the language of desire and action to them. Thus he speaks of sin as present in the actions (actionibus) of natural things (S.T. I-II, 78, 1c). For what distinguishes sin from other forms of evil, such as blindness, is that it is a failure of action. Thomas observes:

> "Evil" is a wider term than "sin," as "good" is a wider term than "right." Each and every privation of good in any subject whatsoever constituted an evil, but a sin, properly speaking consists in an activity done for one end but lacking the due order (debitum ordinem) to it (S.T. I-II, 21, 1c).

Or, as Thomas puts the matter more briefly, "Sin consists properly in an activity" (S.T. I-II, 21, 1 ad 3). So Thomas is willing to speak of sin as occurring in artistic activity: "This is a mistake or failure proper to art, for example, if he intends a good work and makes a bad one, or intends a bad one and makes a good one" S.T. I-II, 21, 2 ad 2). Thomas's application of the notion of sin to artistic activity is not of any further interest to us, though we may observe that Thomas speaks of both artistic and moral activity in teleological terms. The common and fundamental element in all the applications that Thomas makes of the notion of sin is that it is a defect in activity. This should not, however, be understood in such a way as to deny that there can be sins of omission, that is, sins in which the agent fails to act. "A man can sin either by doing what he should not do, or by not doing what he should do" (S.T. I-II, 71, 5 ad 1). Thomas clearly asserts that an omission can be a sin as well as any act of will that results in a failure to do what one ought to do (S.T. I-II, 76, 2 ad 3).

Ontologically then, sin, as a kind of evil, is a privation. This is simply an application of Thomas's general doctrine that evil is privation, the absence of a good that is natural or appropriate to a thing, a doctrine that we shall have to examine in the following section. But Thomas holds that sin is not simply a privation. "Sin is not a total absence of perfection, but an action lacking order" (S.T. I-II, 72, 1 ad 2). "By sin we mean not only the privation of good, which is disorder, but also the action in which order is lacking and which can be considered as bad" (S.T. I-II, 75, 1 ad 1). By making this point, Thomas is able to say that sins are acts of a certain sort and not simply defects in acts. This draws him closer to our ordinary language about sins. In his ontological framework, he is able to ascribe causal effi-

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cacy to sins, which he would not ascribe to mere privations. "Sin is imperfect in the realm of morals and as involving deficiency of order; but as an action it has a certain fulness of being. In this latter sense it is a cause of another sin" (S.T. I-II, 75, 4 ad 2). The view that sin is a privation or, more precisely, an act suffering a privation suggests that Thomas's understanding of sin is basically in terms of what the act is not, of what it lacks. As we shall see, this is a constant, though not exclusive theme, in the different accounts of sin that Thomas proposes.

In a preliminary overview, we can see that, according to Thomas, sin stands in opposition to several other primary elements in moral activity. Thus he contrasts sin with rightness of activity. "A wrong act (peccare) is simply one which deviates from the rightness (rectitudine) a given action ought to have" (S.T. I, 63, 1c). Just as sin is a bad human act, so a righteous act (rectitudo) is a good human act. "According as it [the human act] is good or bad so also is it rightful or sinful" (S.T. I, 21, 1c). It is also, as our first quotation indicates, opposite to virtue. "Sin . . . is opposed to virtue in the sense that it is opposed to the thing to which virtue is ordered; for, properly speaking, sin denotes an inordinate action just as an act of virtue is an ordinate and due action" (S.T. I-II, 71, 1c). However, since sin is an act and virtue is a habit, it is possible for the same person both to commit a sin and to possess a virtue at the same time. "A single sinful act cannot destroy virtue inasmuch as the latter is a habit, for habits are neither engendered nor destroyed by single acts" (S.T.

I-II, 71, 4c). "Sin is contrary only to the act of virtue. Therefore sin cannot co-exist with the act of virtue but can with the habit" (S.T. I-II, 71, 4 ad 1). Every sin also involves the transgression of a precept (S.T. II-II, 162, 2 ad 1). Since Thomas holds that there is a general precept of the natural law to act virtuously (S.T. I-II, 94, 3c), it seems that the claim that every sin involves the transgression of a precept does not require an exhaustive list of divine or human precepts, but can be justified by deriving it from the general precept that one should act virtuously and from the claim that sin is opposed to virtue and virtuous activity.

Sin, Thomas tells us, is also contrary to the order of human reason. "In the realm of human activity a sin implies a breach of the reasonable plan of life (contra ordinem rationis), which requires that things be fittingly ordered to their end" (S.T. II-II, 153, 2c). It is a defect in activity which reason directs to its end and which is to be measured by a rule appropriate to it. For Thomas, a human act derives its goodness or badness and thus its character as a sinful or righteous act from its conformity to a rule that measures its proper order to the end. "A sin, properly speaking, consists in an activity done for some end but lacking the due order to it. This is measured by some rule. . . For activities which issue through will the proximate rule is the human reason, the paramount rule the Eternal Law" (S.T. I-II, 21, 1c). Thomas puts the same doctrine in slightly more explicit fashion in the following passage:

> A human act is evil because it does not meet the standard for human behavior. Standards are nothing other than rules. The human will is subject to a twofold rule: one is proximate and on his own level, i.e. human reason; the other is the first rule beyond man's own level, i.e. the eternal law which is the mind of God (S.T. I-II, 71, 6c).

Because it fails to conform to the rules of human and divine reason, sin is opposed both to reason and to God. Without going into Thomas's account of the various forms of law, it is sufficient for our present purposes to observe that, for Thomas, since the order that directs things to God includes within itself every human order, a sin against any such order is also a sin against God, even though it does not involve the transgression of any explicit divine command or precept. And even though, as we maintained earlier, Thomas's notion of sin is not an explicitly theological notion, "To sin against God is common to all sins, in so far as the order to God includes every human order" (S.T. I-II, 72 4 ad 1). For Thomas, a human act that is contrary to reason is also contrary to God's eternal law, though not necessarily contrary to the divine positive law as manifested in revelation. Of course, in saying this, we do not thereby clarify what it is for an act to be against reason. We should also note that holding that a sin or bad human act is against the rule of reason does not commit Thomas to the view that any human act that is against the rule of reason is therefore a sin. It may simply be absurd or foolish. More fundamentally we should observe that the way in which sin is contrary to reason is teleological; for, as the texts just cited make plain, sin is contrary not to an intellectual intuition of moral rightness, but to a proper order to a goal.

According to Thomas, the kinds of sin are fundamentally distinguished by the end intended by the agent, rather than by the motives of the agent. For, as Thomas observes, evil acts of the same kind can be produced by such different motives as fear and love. He makes the point in general terms:

> But the active principles of willed action such as sin are not confined to a single pattern, and hence it is possible that various kinds of sin flow from the same moving, active principle; thus such things as theft, murder, and dereliction of duty come not only from the fear that engenders false humility, but also from the love which engenders undue ardour (amore). Evidently, then, the specific differentiation of sins comes not from active and moving causes, but only from a diversity of final cause (S.T. I-II, 72, 3c).

This, for Thomas, is a consequence of his doctrines that it is the end which is good in the primary sense and that good is the object of the will. So Thomas can say, "In the concept of the good the chief element is the goal, and therefore, the goal is the object of the act of the will which is the primary constituent of all sin. Thus, differences according to object and according to goal are one and the same thing" (S.T. I-II, 72, 1 ad 1). According to Thomas, it is intending a particular end that determines the various active powers of the agent to do one thing rather than another.

> The active principles of willed actions are not in themselves confined to a single pattern and thus do not adequately account for a human action unless they are determined by the will to a definite end. Therefore, the goal accounts for both the existence and the classification of sin (S.T. I-II, 72, 3 ad 1).

Also, where evil in general is for Thomas a privation and so is divided into kinds corresponding to the goods of which privations are the absence, sin is divided into kinds not according to the privations involved in different sins but according to the objects to which the will positively turns even in sinful acts. "The species of sin is not determined by the element of privation or turning away, but by what the sinner turns to as an object" (S.T. I-II, 72, 9 ad 1).[1]

Examination and clarification of these claims would lead us into the complex question of how Thomas proposes to classify human actions in general and also into his notions of the end and the object of an action and of the way in which these specify an action.[2] For our present purposes it is sufficient to observe that Thomas holds that the goodness or badness of acts is not determined simply by the agent's motive and that he proposes to base the classification of sins on what is, on his view of sin, positive and actual in sinful acts. In talking about kinds of sins, Thomas is not primarily interested in the attitudes, dispositions, or motives of sinful agents, though he does have something to say about these when he discusses the various capital or principal sins (S.T. I-II, 84), but in the different kinds of sinful acts performed by agents. One paradoxical result of this approach is that an individual act, say, of almsgiving, may be wrong by reason of the agent's motive, e.g., vanity; and may therefore be a sin, since a wrong act is a sinful act. (S.T. I-II, 21, 1c). But the act performed under the influence of this motive does not fall under any species or kind of sin, since by reason of its kind it is a good act.

The cause of sin in Thomas's view, is first of all, the will: "The first cause of sin is in the will, which commands all voluntary acts, in which alone is sin to be found" (S.T. I-II, 71, 6 ad 2). Other powers of the soul are causes of sin in so far as they are moved by the will: "There is no sin unless the act is ultimately controlled by the will. Sin is found in other faculties only to the extent that they are moved by the will" (S.T. I-II, 74, 2 ad 1). Since moral activity, according to Thomas, is immanent in the agent, the will is not merely the cause of sin but is also its subject, that is, that in which sin is properly present.

> Some actions do not involve passage into a material thing which is outside, but remain in the agent, e.g., knowing and desiring; and all moral actions, whether virtuous or sinful, are of this type. . . Since to be moral an act must be voluntary, as has been said, it follows that the will which is the source of all voluntary behavior, whether good or bad, is the source of sin. It likewise follows that sin can be founded in the will as in a subject (S.T. I-II, 74, 1c).

Other powers of the agent can also be the subject of sin: "Other faculties have more limited goods or evils as their objects, and for this reason virtue, vice and sin are found in them" (S.T. I-II, 74, 2 ad 2). But as we have already indicated and as the last passage cited suggests, to say that sin is an act of the will entails that it occurs only in consequence of prior activity of the intellect or reason. "For all sin depends on the judgment of reason; even the first motions of sensuality have nothing sinful about them until they come under that control. Take this away and you take away sin" (S.T. II-II, 154, 5c). Thomas holds that sin can be present in the reason: "Accordingly sin is found in the reason, either through being a voluntary defect of the reason, or through the reason being a principle of the will's act" (S.T. I-II, 74, 5 ad 2). Reason, according to Thomas, can fail in its governance of external action with regard to its direction and in its control of interior passions, by stirring up wrongful passions or by failing to check them once they are spontaneously aroused (S.T. I-II, 74, 6c). But, in speaking about sin's presence in the reason, Thomas has to confine himself to cases in which the defective activity of intellect or reason is to some extent voluntary; for he does not wish to identify sin present in reason simply with cognitive error, but only with error about what reason is "able and ought to know," and about which its failure to know is voluntary (S.T. I-II, 74, 5c). Our point here is not to raise the whole issue of voluntary or involuntary ignorance, particularly of moral demands, but simply to indicate that for Thomas, even though sin can be present in the reason, it is primarily and fundamentally a defect in the will.

We shall presently see that Thomas asserts a very close connection between sin and voluntariness. However, while it is the will and, secondarily the reason and the other powers of the agent, that are the subjects in which sin is found, they are not the only causes of sin. For Thomas wishes to allow that there can be external causes of sin, though these operate only "through an interior cause" (S.T. I-II, 75, 3 ad 2). Thomas does not want external causes of sin to restrict or to eliminate the free and autonomous activity of the will itself; so he lays it down that:

> An exterior force can cause sin only by prejudicing the reason, e.g. when a man or a devil persuades one to sin, or by stimulating the sense appetite, e.g. when something which is attractive to the senses arouses the appetite (S.T. I-II, 75, 3c).

The view that Thomas wants to maintain is that "although an exterior force can contribute to sin, it cannot of itself be an adequate inducement; only the will is a sufficient cause for the final accomplishment of the sinful act" (S.T. I-II, 75, 3c).

Our present interest lies not so much in determining whether this claim is justified, but in indicating the general lines along which Thomas proposes to reconcile the claim that there are external causes of sin with his thesis that the will is not moved to sin by necessity. He makes two main moves in this reconciliation. First, he restricts the influence of external causes to the reason and the sensitive appetite and refuses to allow direct influence of external causes (except for God) on the will itself. External causes then operate indirectly on the will by way of the intellect's presentation of an object to the will as good or by arousing movements of the inferior or sensitive appetite towards sensible goods that can be put before the senses by external causes. Second, he holds that such indirect influence of external causes does not move the will necessarily.

> Exterior persuasion cannot force the will, nor can something inescapably attractive to the senses arouse the appetite unless the latter is appropriately disposed. Furthermore, even the sense appetite cannot compel either reason or will (S.T. I-II, 75, 3c).

Now these moves can seem rather arbitrary; it might well be urged that they are only plausible to one already convinced of the libertarian view of human choice. But, in assessing them, one should bear in mind Thomas's notion of sin as an interior act that can be performed only by the will or intellectual appetite. In Thomas's view, whatever external causes or pressures may be brought to bear on a person to bring it about that the person behave in a certain way, there can be no question of sin unless there is some interior movement of consent or choice, regardless of what bad or wrong acts the person who is being influenced may perform. Sin, for Thomas, can only be a voluntary act in which external influence does not amount to the kind of coercion that eliminates voluntariness and, with it, sin. We should not construe what Thomas says here as an implausible assurance that coercion is somehow impossible. As we saw earlier, the will for Thomas is simply not the sort of power that can be impelled into activity by another (except for God, who is both universal cause and creator). Of course, this leaves open the question of just what external acts performed by human agents are performed as the result of interior voluntary acts and of just how it can be shown that such external acts are immune from external causal determination. What Thomas does propose is a position that affirms the freedom of the will in its interior activity and admits the influence of external causes on human acts through reason and sense appetite. According to Thomas:

> The internal causes of sin are not only the will which finally accomplishes the act of sin, but also the reason whose failure accounts for the lack of order, and the sense appetite which draws both toward sin (S.T. I-II, 75, 3c).

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This passage suggests an important consequence of Thomas's claim that it is the will or rational appetite that is the cause and subject of sin, namely, that the sensitive appetite is the cause of sin only remotely (S.T. I-II, 75, 3c). Thus, when passion precedes the activity of the will and diminishes voluntariness, it also diminishes the sinfulness of the act performed: "An act is sinful only to the extent that it is voluntary and of the self (in nobis)" (S.T. I-II, 77, 6c). The movement of the sensitive appetite is independent of the will, though to some extent subject to its control (see S.T. I, 81, 3c). Its movement may be to what is morally wrong, but it is not thereby sinful, unless there be consent of the will. For it is only voluntary activity that can be sinful, "because a sin must always be voluntary" (S.T. I-II, 76, 3c). Thus, if an act is rendered completely involuntary by some natural causes, the agent is entirely excused from sin (see S.T. I-II, 77, 7c). Those factors which impair the operation of reason and will in voluntary human activity and thus lessen voluntariness also lessen sin: "Causes which weaken judgment, e.g., ignorance, or interfere with the free movement of the will, e.g., sickness, force, and fear, lessen sinfulness just as they lessen voluntariness.(S.T. I-II, 73, 6c). So there are degrees of sin corresponding to degrees of voluntariness. For Thomas the notion of sin presupposes the notion of a voluntary act or human act (except in those cases where he speaks of a sin in nature); and sin is simply a bad human act: "according as it [the human act] is good or bad so also is it rightful or sinful" (S.T. I-II, 21, 1c). So the notion of sin always has psychological content.

Thus one can affirm that a person has done a wrong or bad act without regard to whether the act is voluntary or not; but one cannot affirm that a person has sinned without implying that the act was voluntary. The degree of voluntariness is not the only factor that determines the degree of sinfulness of an act, which also depends on such other factors as the object of the act, the virtue to which the act is opposed, the circumstances of the act, and the harm that it produces (S.T. I-II, 73).

Since sin is in Thomas's view always voluntary, it is always in place to speak of the sinner's intention, which is a necessary condition for the performance of human acts and which determines the occurrence and the kind of species of the sin (S.T. I-II, 72, 3 ad 1). What the sinner intends is always a good of some sort, but it lacks the appropriate connections to other goods which are found in right activity.

> The sinner does not intend to depart from the rule of reason, but to pursue a desirable good from which the species of the sin is derived. The desirable goods thus sought by the sinner who departs from the rule of reason are not mutually connected, sometimes in fact, they are contraries (S.T. I-II, 73, 1c).

Two Concepts of Sin

What has been said so far gives us certain general features of Thomas's concept of sin. We must, however, recognize that Thomas has two rather different ways of thinking about sin. The first way is conceiving of it as a disordered act (actus inordinatus); this way attempts to capture both the ontological reality of sin as an act and the ontological privation that produces its evil character. The second way is conceiving of it as a turning from God and the ultimate end (aversio) and a turning to some lesser good (conversio). This way, which has affinities with both the Biblical and the Augustinian notions of sin, relates sin both to the agent's direction and orientation of his life and to the teleological framework that Thomas proposes for moral activity as a whole. This second way of conceiving sin will also bring up the problem of eogism and self-love in Thomas's account of sin.

Thomas's first way of conceiving sin as disordered activity derives from his metaphysical thesis that all being and activity are as such good. Sinful activity is evil because it suffers from a privation, "the absence of something that ought to be there" (S.T. I-II, 75, 1c). As a privation and not a mere negation, it must have a cause; as we saw earlier, it must be accounted for. As an activity, it can have a proper or per se cause (S.T. I-II, 75, 1c); and it can itself be the cause of other acts and sins (S.T. I-II, 75, 4 ad 1). The distinction between the goodness of the act and the badness of the lack of order in the act is also necessary if Thomas is to defend his claims that appetite is always directed to good and that all objects of appetite are good. For, as we have seen, sin for Thomas is always voluntary and so always involves will or rational appetite, and it is therefore directed to good. It is also by definition a bad human act. So, by distinguishing act and privation, Thomas can say: "Sin, in so far as it is lacking in order, is evil, but in so far as it is an action it has at least some apparent good as its goal" (S.T. I-II, 75, 4 ad 1). The lack of order that is characteristic of sin is present in the acts of the will that are directed to the good that is desired: "Every sin consists in the pursuit of some passing good that is inordinately desired and consequently in the inordinate delight of possession" (S.T. I-II, 72, 2c). But the order itself that is absent in those voluntary acts of desire and delight is fundamentally rational and teleological. Thus Thomas holds that sin can be present in reason and rational appetite: "Reason alone and not man's sensual part orders him to his ultimate[3] goal. Disorder relative to the goal can only happen in the faculty which should provide that order" (S.T. I-II, 74, 4c). As we have seen earlier, while Thomas holds that all beings, both intellectual and non-intellectual, are directed to goals, he holds that it is only intellectual beings that actively direct things to ends. For the ordering of means to ends is an operation of the practical intellect (S.T. I, 79, 11c). Though Thomas does not advert to these possibilities, it should be pointed out, that the disorder present in sin need not be a lack of teleogical order; it could also be a lack of conformity to a rule either in the form of a deontological moral norm or more specifically in the form of a divine command. Thomas may have this possibility in mind when he speaks of an angel's sin: "Of his own free will he pursued a good for himself without regard for the rule of the divine will" (S.T. I, 63, 1 ad 4). He also speaks of sin as a deviation from rightness, where the rule of rightness is said to be "the virtue of the agent" (S.T. I, 63, 1c). Elsewhere Thomas says: "Lack of order can be ascribed to the human will when it loves a lesser good too much" (S.T. I-II, 78, 1c). Here lack of order seems to involve a misranking of goods, a mistake in evaluating. The point is that, while it is true that Thomas almost always thinks of order in teleological terms and while it may be possible to reduce other forms of order to teleological order (for instance, by ranking goods in relation to the final end or by deriving rules of conduct from the suitability of means to the ultimate end), it is possible to combine Thomas's account of sin as a privation of proper order in human activity with a number of different positions on how proper order in human activity is to be determined. Conceiving of sin as disordered activity does not commit one to regarding sin as departure from a teleological order to the final good.

The teleological factor is more important in Thomas's second way of conceiving sin, which takes as its central terms aversio (a turning from) and conversio (a turning to). This second way is especially important to Thomas's understanding of the distinction between mortal and venial sin. He writes:

> Hence, when the soul is so disordered by sin that it turns away from its ultimate goal, God, to whom it is united by charity, then we speak of mortal sin. However, when this disordered act stops short of turning away (aversionem) from God, then the sin is venial (S.T. I-II, 72, 5c; see S.T.I-II, 74, 9c).

Thomas also speaks of the "nature" of mortal sin, which "is a turning away from God" (S.T. II-II, 162, 5c). Now, in accordance with

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Thomas's views on good as the necessary object of the will, he holds that the turning away from God which is present in mortal sin is not desired or willed as such by the sinner, but is the *per accidens* result of the sinner's turning to a lesser good. So he says: "The cause of sin (*propria et per se*) is assigned by reason of man's turning to the perishable good, and from the point of view every sin presupposes an inordinate desire for some temporal good" (*S.T.* I-II, 77, 5c). We shall have to return to the question of how Thomas characterizes the lesser good that the sinner turns to. We should notice, however, that it is the turning to a good other than God that determines the species of the sin. "The species of sin is not determined by the element of privation or turning away, but by what the sinner turns to as an object" (*S.T.* I-II, 72, 9 *ad* 1).

The degree of gravity of a sin for Thomas depends on whether or not it involves a turning away from God; for Thomas does not believe that every turning to a good less than God, even if it involves a morally wrong act or is somehow contrary to reason, is so serious that it necessarily involves a turning from God. Both mortal and venial sins can occur within the same species of sin (*S.T.* I-II, 72, 5, *ad* 1; *ad* 2), where on his account there is a turning to the same specific object. The variety of objects to which it is possible for the human agent to turn accounts for the variety of kinds of sins. Thomas, however, does not clarify the nature of the relation of the objects of the sinner's *conversio* to the sinner's *aversio* or turning from God. If we put to one side those cases in which a person consciously and explicitly prefers some good to God or disobeys one of God's commands, it is not clear just why turning to certain finite goods should also involve a turning away from God. Neither the notion of conversion nor the notion of aversion seems to shed light on the problem of determining just what (if any) finite objects of desire are incompatible with a person's orientation to God as his last end. For in the case of venial sins, conversion to finite goods is compatible with continued orientation to God; whereas aversion from God is a common feature of all kinds of mortal sin on Thomas's view. These difficulties can be lessened to some extent if we accept the distinction between aversio and conversio as pointing to two aspects of the sinner's situation, once it is granted that the act he is performing is a sin, and not as providing us with an account of when an action is sinful. We should also recall that, because of the psychological requirements of knowledge and voluntariness that Thomas includes in his notion of sin, it is not possible to argue simply from the fact that a person has performed a certain wrong act, no matter how heinous that act may be, to the conclusion that this person stands in a relation of aversion to God. The performance of a wrong act estranges one from God, only if the act is a sin; Thomas is not dealing with non-moral effects of wrong actions, but with the bearing of sinful actions on the sinner's ultimate orientation in life.

What Thomas says about the good to which the sinner turns is not helpful to our efforts to understand how the conversio-aversio distinction is to be employed. He speaks of the good to which the sinner turns as "perishable" (commutabile) (S.T. I-II, 77, 4c; S.T. I-II, 72, 2c), and also as a "temporal" good "of this world" (temporale) (S.T. I-II, 78, 1c). However, it is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for sin that an agent turn to a temporal or perishable good. It is not necessary, for Thomas tells us that the angels sin without having any inclination to temporal goods (S.T. I, 63, 1 ad 4). It is not sufficient, for not every turning to or appetite for a temporal or changeable good is sinful. Thus there is sin when a person loves wealth or pleasure more than the order of reason or the order of God's law (S.T. I-II, 78, 1c); but the mere desire for wealth or pleasure is not sinful in itself (S.T. I-II, 34, 1c). Thomas characterizes the good to which the sinner can turn in a vague and inconclusive way, and there is little reason to think that he meant to do anything more than to point to the class of goods that are conceptually and really distinct from God himself and so can be chosen in opposition to God.

The difference between Thomas's first way of conceiving of sin as disordered activity and his second way of conceiving of it in terms of aversion from God and conversion to a lesser good is not great, since he develops both conceptions in fundamentally teleological ways. Thus in the first conception, order is understood as the order of means to an end, while in the second conception God is regarded as the last end. The two conceptions could be developed in rather different ways. As we have already seen, the conception of sin as disordered activity could be worked out in such a way that sin is seen as failure to conform to a rule or command of God, or an order of creation in Calvin's terminology.[4] Or the conception of sin as aversion from God and conversion to a lesser good could be developed in ways that bring out the kinship of these notions to ideas of loyalty, of personal choice, and of moral self-definition. Such a development would bring Thomas's theory closer to the account of the loves that dominate the city of God and the city of man[5] and to those contemporary moral theologians who have set out to understand man's moral life in terms of a fundamental option or orientation of the personality.[6] It is characteristic of Thomas that he eschews both these lines of development and that he interprets these two conceptions of sin in terms of his basic teleological account of human activity and in a way that minimizes both voluntarism and dualism in favor of his metaphysical thesis of the goodness of all things and of all objects of choice.

In fact, one of the places where Thomas's account of sin runs into manifest difficulty is a place where he is attempting to develop his teleological account of human activity to apply to the Augustinian contrast between love of self and love of God.[7] His argument runs as follows:

> Properly speaking, the cause of sin is assigned by reason of man's turning to the perishable good, and from this point of view every sin presupposes an inordinate desire for some temporal good. Man's inordinate love for a temporal good comes from an inordinate love of himself, for when we love someone we wish him good. Quite clearly, then, it follows that inordinate self-love is the cause of all sin (S.T. I-II, 77, 4c).

Thomas here maintains that where there is sin, there is disordered appetite or desire and that where there is disordered appetite or desire there must be disordered love of self. Thomas explicitly acknowledges that not all self-love is morally wrong: "A properly directed love of self is both obligatory (debitus) and natural, so that a man might will for himself things that are good for him" (S.T. I-II, 77, 4 ad 1). So he does not want to maintain that an act is wrong because it proceeds from self-love. But the difficulty comes in Thomas's assumption that what one desires or what is the object of one's appetite is desired for one's own good. This is an assumption that he makes explicit in S.T. I-II, 77, 4 ad 3: "For a man desires a good thing or shuns an evil because he loves himself." We might be willing to grant that where there is sin (a wrong act knowingly and willfuly done), there is disordered appetite or desire, but not that all disordered appetite or desire must be for one's own good and so an expression or result of self-love. As Thomas himself is aware, one could sin because of love of another, and because one desired, not one's own good, but the good of that other. Thomas's reply to this difficulty is that "A friend is a second self. Thus when a man sins, because of love for a friend, he sins for love of himself" (S.T. I-II, 77, 4 ad 4). Here Thomas finds himself forced to take literally a metaphorical simplification of the complex mutuality of friendship; he does this largely because, in his desire to appropriate as much as he can of Augustine's doctrine, he interprets his teleological account of desire and activity along egoistic lines. This goes against his own account of the direction of the will to universal good as its object, an object which is not limited to the good for me or for the subject of choice. Thomas, however, in the following article, reverses his argument to some extent: "As has been mentioned, inordinate love of self is the basic cause of all sin. This love of self consists in an inordinate desire for things that are good, for loving someone means desiring good things for him. Accordingly, it can also be said that an inordinate desire for good is the cause of all sin" (S.T. I-II, 77, 5c). Here Thomas argues that where there is disordered self-love, there is disordered desire for good, and that where there is disordered desire for good, there is sin. This argument does not have egoistic presuppositions. The main objection that can be brought against it is to point out that a dispositional desire or appetite need not lead to an act of sin. But the argument could readily be so as to eliminate this source of confusion. In fact, the argument simply brings us back to Thomas's conception of sin as voluntary disordered activity.

Sins of Weakness

In discussing the causes of sin, Thomas distinguishes between sins which are caused by the sense appetite (S.T. I-II, 77) and sins which are caused by malice (*malitia*) (S.T. I-II, 78). The category of sins which are caused by the sense appetite is wider than the class of sins of incontinence, which in Thomas's scheme of the virtues, deal with pleasures of touch (S.T. I-II, 155, 2c). Continence and incontinence are parts of temperance and intemperance, respectively; and Thomas uses the notion of incontinence in a somewhat more restricted sense than Aristotle uses the notion of akrasia. Thus Thomas does not, in the Summa Theologiae, consider the forms of akrasia in respect of such goods as money, gain and honor that Aristotle considers in Nicomachean Ethics VII.4. But, despite some minor terminological variations, it is clear that fundamentally the same problem arises whether we label the phenomenon akrasia or incontinence or "backsliding."[9] It is the problem of how the general account of sin as the disordered voluntary activity of a personal agent applies to situations in which the agent voluntarily does what he knows to be wrong, or fails to do what he knows to be right, because of the influence of some desire or appetite that is at least momentarily at variance with right order in desire and activity. As we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, this task of accounting for choices and voluntary actions that are in some way seen to be wrong is particularly difficult for Thomas because of his metaphysical thesis that all things are good and his psychological thesis that all choices and appetites are directed to good.

The first move that Thomas makes in handling this problem is to give an account of the psychological conflict involved in such cases. A succinct statement of this is given in the following passage:

> The will comes midway between the reason and the desirous sensory appetite and can be moved by either: in the continent man by his reason, in the incontinent man by his sensory appetite. Accordingly the prime factor of continence is the will, and that of incontinence is the sensory appetite. All the same, both [continence and incontinence] are immediately situated

in and elicited by the will (S.T. II-II, 155, 3 ad 2).

As we have already seen in earlier actions, Thomas distinguishes the sensitive appetite, of which the concupiscible is a part, and the intellectual appetite or will, which are really distinct powers and which are capable of resisting or opposing each other (S.T. II-II, 155, 3 ad 1; see S.T. I-II, 9, 2c, S.T. I, 81, 3c). This sort of move has been attractive to philosophers since Plato.[10]

But it leads to a misleading characterization of goods and of desires for goods. This can be seen in Thomas's discussion of the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eye, and the pride of life as causes of sin.[11] After observing that "the good is the object of the sense appetite in two different ways," Thomas goes on to offer the following qualification to his account of the sensitive appetite:

> Some concupiscible desires are natural in the sense that they relate to things which maintain one's physical nature, whether it be food, drink, and the like which support individual life; or sex, which provides for the preservation of the species. The technical term which embraces the inordinate desire for all of these goods is concupiscence of the flesh. Other concupiscible desires are of a more highly animal sort in that they do not provide for the maintenance of the body or the satisfaction of the senses . . . they delight not because they are felt but because they are thought about, e.g. money, fine clothes and the like. The technical term for such desire is concupiscence of the eye (S.T. I-II, 77, 5c).

Thomas then goes on to explain the pride of life as an inordinate desire for goods that are difficult of attainment. Now it is clear that desires for food, for sex, for money, for goods difficult of in and elicited by the will (S.T. II-II, 155, 3 ad 2).

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Thomas then goes on to explain the pride of life as an inordinate desire for goods that are difficult of attainment. Now it is clear that desires for food, for sex, for money, for goods difficult of attainment can all be at variance with one's moral obligations and with the pursuit of one's ultimate goal.

But it is far from clear that all such desires should be treated simply as desires of the sensitive appetite. In the first place, unlike other animals, we form concepts of the objects of our sensitive appetites and are able to perform intellectual operations concerning these objects and to understand the bearing of these objects on our good in general. In the second place, as Thomas is half prepared to recognize, the satisfactions we derive from objects that satisfy our bodily and animal needs are more complex than the satisfaction of a simple physical desire, and the complexity of these satisfactions depends very largely on human imagination and memory and language. The more complex and more distinctively human character of these satisfactions does not necessarily render them less of a challenge to the pursuit of the moral good or to the living of an upright life. These difficulties can perhaps be met by developing an account of a distinctively human sensitive appetite, an account which elucidates the way in which the human intellectual faculties influence and to some extent transform the impulses and objects of the sensitive appetite. But a third difficulty remains, which is more fundamental. For it is not the case that only desires for objects of the sensitive appetite or for objects that are somehow tangible provide temptations to moral weakness. Desires for such things as power, fame, security, esteem, and other things which can only indirectly (if at all) be defined in terms of material or tangible goods can also come into conflict

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with pursuit of the moral good.

What all these difficulties come to is a criticism of the dualistic conclusions about the classification of goods that are implicit in Thomas's distinction between sensitive appetite and intellectual appetite. Thomas, though explicitly denying the view that pleasures produced by bodily objects are necessarily bad (S.T. I-II, 34 1 ad 1), does adopt the view that the pursuit of spiritual good is naturally without sin. Thus, in discussing the sin of the angels, he says: "But how can there be sin in desiring spiritual satisfactions? In one way only, namely, by not observing the measure imposed by a higher will than one's own" (S.T. I, 63, 2c). The same tendency to regard spiritual desires and satisfactions as good and physical desires and satisfactions as at least potentially evil can be seen in the following passage: "Incontinence is a sin for two reasons; first, because the incontinent man goes astray from that which is in accord with reason; secondly, because he plunges into shameful pleasures" (S.T. II-II, 156, 2c). What is revealing here is that Thomas does not condemn incontinence solely because it involves a departure from reason and from moral rightness, but also because it involves the agent in base pleasures. Just why the pleasures should be regarded as base other than on the grounds of their being unreasonable or immoral is not clear, and we can surmise here the effects of an implicit dualism that is moral and evaluative as well as psychological and descriptive. Thomas's account of moral weakness and conflict of desires in terms of a simple opposition between higher and lower, intellectual and sensitive appetites, draws much of its plausibility from failure to consider the full range of cases of moral weakness as well as from this implicit dualism. Thomas's move from conflicting desires to opposed faculties encourages a tendency to fit all such conflicts into one pattern.

As we mentioned earlier in our examination of Thomas's account of the will as rational appetite, Thomas has two different conceptions of will. The first is the notion of will as the appetite of the intellect for objects proper to it, and the second is the notion of will as the power of choice governing all the appetites and inclinations of the being. Now, even if one doubts the soundness of Thomas's account of moral conflict and weakness in terms of the distinction between reason and the sensitive appetite, which are drawn to different kinds of goods, one might still preserve a function for reason in adjudicating and for will in choosing among alternative objects of conflicting desires. One could thus retain a great deal of what Thomas says about moral weakness.

The general scenario that Thomas proposes for sins of weakness is the following:

> Functions of the soul are said to be abnormal (inordinatae) when they are not controlled by reason, for reason is the regulative force behind the activities of the soul. Thus when the concupiscible or irascible appetites of man are aroused by uncontrolled emotion so that they hinder a man from behaving properly . . . the man is said to sin from weakness (S.T. I-II, 77, 3c).

The movement of desire or aversion on the part of the sensitive appetite can occur either before reason has considered what is to be done or after:

> First, as when the soul gives way before the reason has deliberated; this is called unbridled incontinence or flying into an unpremeditated passion. Second, as when a man does not stick to thinking out what he should do and only feebly holds to his resolve of reason; this incontinence is called weakness (S.T. II-II, 156, 1c).

As we have already seen, Thomas holds that the influence of emotion and sensitive appetite prior to the activity of reason diminishes voluntariness and thus the sinful character of the action (S.T. I-II, 77, 6c). He also allows that the influence of emotion and sensitive appetite can be such as to eliminate the activity of reason and will (S.T. I-II, 10, 3c; S.T. I-II, 77, 7c). But since the resulting actions no longer count as human or moral actions, there is no question of their being instances of sins committed as the result of moral weakness. In general, sin must, according to Thomas, be a voluntary act. More specifically, Thomas holds that "the direct cause of incontinence arises on the part of the soul through its failure to resist passion by reason" (S.T. II-II, 156, 1c). A sin of weakness must be voluntary and must in some way belong to the soul or to man's intellectual nature. The movement of sense appetite to its object, even when the subject is a morally wrong act, is not of itself a sin (S.T. II-II, 185, 5c). A sin of weakness is in a certain way like a sin of omission. Thomas says at one point: "There is also another way in which an action can be described as voluntary. Although the act might not proceed directly from the will, it is nevertheless voluntary because a man could have willingly prevented an event but did not (S.T. I-II, 77, 7c). What is voluntary in such a case is a failure to act against sense appetite; the action that ensues is both the result of the movement of the sense appetite and is voluntary in the failure of will to act contrary to that movement. Of course, it may be that the will actively, even if temporarily, supports and seconds the movement of sense appetite. This may be the result of a failure of the activity of reason. Such a failure or omission is indicated in Thomas's discussion of the internal causes of sin:

> The faculty of willing is a potential cause of sin which is reduced to act by the previous activity first of sense and then of reason. First a thing is perceived as good by the sense, then it is desired by the physical appetite so that reason sometimes ceases to judge in the light of its rule, and thus the will produces the sinful act (S.T. I-II, 75, 2 ad 1).

This account is sufficiently general that it can apply to cases where there is considerable psychological conflict and tension as a result of opposing desires and to cases in which, because of the failure of the activity or reason, will and sensitive appetite move in the same direction.

Thomas's account of sins of weakness does go some way to meet the questions put by D. J. O'Connor in his criticism of Thomas's doctrine of will as rational appetite. There O'Connor asks "how acts done out of lack of self-control are free acts" and "how are acts still free when they are no longer guided by reason."[12] The view we are upholding here is that Thomas does have a way of accounting for those acts which are done as a result of movements of the sensitive appetite and which are permitted or not opposed by the will. If the notion of lack of self-control were taken to apply to cases where there is no voluntary action, then, of course, Thomas would deny that such actions are free (S.T. I-II, 77, 7c). The step that Thomas takes beyond mere description of the phenomenon of a human agent's departing from the norm of reason is that he sees a sin of moral weakness as the result of the movement of the sensitive appetite and the failure of contrary activity by the human will or power of decision. For without some element of voluntariness or some activity of the will, there can be no sin in the activity of the sense appetite. So Thomas concludes that "the conditions for incontinence are mainly psychological (*ad animam pertinet*)" (S.T. II-II, 156, 1c). More generally, he holds that the proximate causes of sin are reason and will, whereas imagination and sensitive appetite are only remote causes of sin (S.T. I-II, 75, 2c). Thomas does give an account of the phenomenon of moral weakness that is compatible with his notion of will as faculty of choice regulating a plurality of appetites. On the other hand, if will is understood merely as the appetite of the intellect for the goods proper to it, then it may be admitted that a sin of moral weakness involving a movement of the sensitive appetite to goods proper to it falls outside the scope of the will so understood.

A failure to recognize these two different ways in which Thomas understands the will may lie behind Donald Davidson's puzzling treatment of Aquinas in his article, "How Is Weakness of the Will Possible?" Davidson compares two classical accounts of incontinence:

> The image we get of incontinence from Aristotle, Aquinas, and Hare is of a battle or struggle between two contestants. Each contestant is armed with his argument or principle. One side may be labelled 'passion' and the other 'reason'; they fight; one side wins, the wrong side, the side called 'passion' (or 'lust' or 'pleasure'). There is, however, a competing image (to be found in Plato, as well as in Butler and many others). It is adumbrated by Dante (who thinks he is following Aquinas and Aristotle) when he speaks of the incontinent man as one who 'lets desire pull reason from her throne.' (Inferno, Canto V). Here there are three actors on the stage: reason, desire, and the one who lets desire get the upper hand. The third actor is perhaps named 'The Will' (or 'Conscience'). It is up to the Will to decide who wins the battle. If the Will is strong, he gives the palm to reason; if he is weak, he may allow pleasure or passion the upper hand.[13]

It should be clear from what has been said that Dante is right and Davidson is wrong about Thomas's views on the interaction of emotion, reason, and will in sins of weakness according to Thomas. For, since Thomas requires that sin be voluntary and holds that sensitive appetite is distinct from the will and that the emotions of the sensitive appetite can extinguish voluntariness, Thomas needs will as a faculty of choice whose consent is essential if the wrong act is truly to be a sin. Thomas needs will as what Davidson calls "the third actor" in his scenario of moral weakness. Davidson's description of Thomas's views would have some plausibility if will were only the appetite of the intellect and so perhaps reducible to the intellectual or rational actor in the inner drama.

The sinful act arising from moral weakness is, then, an act of the will; and it has the ontological non-moral goodness that is consequent on its existence: "Every action inasmuch as it has something real about it has something good about it" (S.T. I-II, 18, 1c). But such an action lacks the moral goodness that is appropriate to it as a human action. It is, because it is a sin, an actus inordinatus, an act lacking in due or proper order; and so it is a being or reality marked by the privation of some goodness appropriate to it. This privation itself has no independent reality, but is always present in some actual being that has at least the goodness of existence (S.T. I, 48, 3c). So the occurrence of such a sin does not in any way contravene Thomas's metaphysical thesis of the goodness of all actual beings.

With regard to Thomas's psychological thesis that all objects of human choice are good, the occurrence of sins of moral weakness presents some difficulty, but this is not insuperable. In the first place, the object chosen just because it is real has at least ontological goodness. However, if it need have no more than ontological goodness, the psychological thesis would become equivalent to the Aristotelian dictum that choice is only of the possible.[14] For only the impossible would lack ontological goodness, since it could not exist. Requiring only ontological goodness would in effect eliminate the problem of the choice of evil, since it would say that there could be no actual object of choice that would be evil. But this elimination of the problem is achieved only by adopting such an all-inclusive notion of goodness that one could no longer make a significant distinction between good and evil in the actual world.

In the second place, as we saw in our discussion of Thomas's notion of consideratio, any good, except perfect good or beatitude, will be seen by the agent to be not-good as well as good (S.T. I-II, 13, 6c). So in Thomas's general account of the functioning of the will, there is no requirement that the object chosen be good or be seen to be good in all respects. But the choice of an object that is not good in some respect or that fails to satisfy the inclinations or desires of the agent in some respect is not equivalent to the choice of an object that is evil, that is, an object that lacks a perfection or quality that it ought naturally to possess. As Thomas himself constantly maintains, evil is a privation, not a negation. It is one thing to show that, on one's theory of the will, a human agent can choose something that is good and not good; in fact, on Thomas's view, all objects of human choice other than perfect beatitude fall under this category. It is another thing to show that, on the theory proposed, an agent can choose something that is both good and evil.

In the third place, it is important that both the choice of good and of evil not be understood in purely egoistic terms. As we have already indicated, this is an issue on which Thomas lacks precision, because of his reliance on a teleological model of activity in which the agent pursues his own goal and his own good and because of his concomitant failure to explore the distinction between the notion of "good for A" and the notion of good in general.

Thus, in delineating the class of objects of choice, Thomas makes the following comment: "Accordingly the completion of the will's act relates to its being applied to what is a real good for the person acting. Now this cannot be something impossible. Hence veritable willing is only of what is good and possible for him" (S.T. I-II, 13, 5 ad 1). Now, if a passage like this is taken as asserting a requirement that the object of choice be a non-moral good for the agent, then it would be open to refutation by way of counter-examples. Human agents do choose to do or suffer things that are not to their personal advantage but that they believe to be morally good or to the advantage of others. To suggest that in doing so they have egoistic motives does not alter the fact that the object of choice in such a case is not the chooser's non-moral good. The object of choice must be something that the agent believes to be possible for him, but it need not be a good for him.

Now it is true that Thomas's overall account of the destiny of the human agent makes the course of action required for his long-range non-moral good or his self-interest coincide with the course of action required by moral law and virtue. This coincidence of interest and virtue clouds the issue somewhat by allowing one to maintain that every sacrifice of non-moral good for the sake of moral good is merely a short-term loss and is really in the long run a means to a higher level of non-moral good. Thus, even in such situations of drastic renunciation as the laying down of one's life, the human agent, so long as he chooses what is morally good, chooses what is in the long run both non-morally good for him and what is morally good, since he will, in the end, by reason of his moral goodness, attain the vision of God or beatitude. Now Thomas's assertion of his coincidence of virtue and interest depends on views about the existence of God, the immortality of individual souls, and the activity of God as a just judge that are not self-evident for Thomas and that are not on his account of things somehow implicit in the notions of will and good and choice. We note that Thomas does not appeal to these views in order to establish or defend the psychological thesis that every choice is directed to the good. Since Thomas does not appeal to these considerations, and since without them refutation of the egoistic interpretation of the psychological thesis seems comparatively easy, it is preferable to interpret the psychological thesis in a non-egoistic way so that the good that is chosen by the agent may be moral or non-moral, his own or another's.

This brings us back to our initial problem with Thomas's theory of the will, which is not simply how a person can act against his self-interest, but how a person can act against his judgment of what is right and good. It is true, of course, that many, perhaps even most, sins of weakness are contrary to the agent's self-interest as well as to moral law and virtue. As we have suggested earlier, the important contrast and tension in Thomas's account of moral weakness is not between moral and non-moral goods, but between goods to which we are inclined by sensitive appetite and goods to which we are inclined by rational appetite. Thus we find that in Thomas there is not a fundamental contrast between prudence and morality or between self-regarding and other-regarding desires. We have already indicated some of our difficulties that arise because of Thomas's interpretation of moral weakness in terms of a conflict between higher and lower appetites and also because of Thomas's ambiguous notion of will as both the higher, rational appetite and the faculty of choice for all desires and appetites.

Against these difficulties we should set what is one of the central merits of Thomas's account of moral weakness, which is that it does accord with the psychological thesis. Thomas gives the following brief scenario for sins of weakness: "First a thing is perceived as good by the senses, then it is desired by the physical appetite so that reason sometimes ceases to judge in the light of its rule, and thus the will produces the sinful act" (S.T. I-II, 75, 2 ad 1). Here we find the basic elements in Thomas's account of sins of moral weakness. First, there is an object attractive to sense appetite and so at least apparently good. Second, the sense appetite actually desires the thing. Third, reason withdraws from consideration of the proper standard or rule that is applicable to the object in question. The influence of emotion or sense appetite on a human act is not sufficient to make the act bad, though it can make the act less of a fully human act (S.T. I-II, 74, 3 ad 3). It is not the influence of sense appetite that makes the resulting act bad, but its contravention of a rule of reason that applies to the action, independently of the causes that bring about the occurence of the act and of the process of their interaction. Thomas puts the matter in the following terms: "Since it has already been established that the cause of sin is an apparent good which lacks conformity to the rule of reason or the divine law, this appearance of good which moves the will springs from sense perception and desire" (S.T. I-II, 75, 2c). Here again we see the effect of Thomas's dualism in immediately assigning the good that attracts us away from what is morally right to the realm of sense appetite. We may wonder why Thomas speaks of "the appearance of good" (*apparens bonum*). For, on one way of understanding the psychological thesis, there is no need for him to be concerned about mere "apparent goods," since every object of will and choice, simply by virtue of being willed and chosen, is therefore desired and good. This in effect regards the psychological thesis as a tautology; and more will have to be said about it when we consider Thomas's views on the definition of good. But we can now point out that such a reading of the psychological thesis makes all talk of apparent goods unnecessary. For, if the agent knows that he actually desires X and if "good" simply means "desired," then, if he understands the meaning of "good," he knows that X is good, not merely apparently but also really.

In trying to understand what Thomas has in mind when he speaks of apparent good, we cannot rule out altogether the possibility of his making a contrast between apparent sensible goods and real spiritual and rational goods; but such a sharply dualistic position would go against his insistence on the goodness of even non-rational pleasures (cf. S.T. I-II, 34, 1 *ad* 1). There are two other ways of interpreting Thomas's talk about apparent goods in this context that may both be helpful. The first is to take "apparent good" to refer to those things, which, while actually being good as the objects of various natural inclinations and as objects satisfying desire, are not actually what is really good for an individual person in particular circumstances after all relevant considerations have been weighed. Apparent goods in this view are not good in the last analysis of a particular case. They stand in contrast, not to real goods, but to the good or the best or the right thing or to the moral or overriding good. The second way of reading Thomas's talk of apparent goods is to take it as implying the possibility of cognitive error in our assessment of various objects of desire. Here what is an apparent good is contrasted with what is really good. My desire for what is in fact a toadstool is a desire for an apparent good and not for a real good, since the toadstool will not satisfy my desires as a mushroom will, and will in fact produce undesired consequences; but it remains true that I have a real desire for what is not a real good. Here "X is an apparent good" comes very close to "X is thought to be good by the agent." Here also we seem to have the sharpest problem for the psychological thesis; for it seems that this understanding of the notion of apparent good commits us to admitting that some desires or choices are for things that are not actually good.

Thomas is aware of this problem, and his main way of defending the psychological thesis is to give up any requirement that the thing chosen be actually good and to replace it by the weaker requirement that the thing be thought of as good. Thus he says:

> Since the will's object is a good as known (bonum apprehensum), we should judge of it according to the manner in which it falls within our apprehension. . . . The will may reach out to something which is apprehended as good, yet is not true good (vere bonum) (S.T. I-II, 13, 5 ad 2).

This for Thomas is a consequence of his notion of the will as an appetite that is dependent on the intellect for its object. This move handles the problems arising from errors about the species, the properties, and the effects of objects of choice in so far as they bear on the goodness of the object. If the agent does not know relevant properties or results of an action that he chooses, or if he misunderstands the kind of action he is performing, he may believe that the action is good when it is not; but, since he believes that the action is good, his will can be directed to it. An agent can fall into this sort of error both with regard to actions that he believes to be morally good and with regard to actions that he believes to be non-morally good or to have non-morally good results. Normally the error is corrected when the agent gets fuller knowledge of relevant facts about the situation of choice. Thus only the suicidal knowingly eat toadstools. What we are really dealing with in this and in parallel moral cases is ignorance as a cause of sin or failure.

But the situation of the person who sins through moral weakness need not involve ignorance of facts about the situation. Thus the person who voluntarily drinks alcohol to excess may know quite well all the relevant facts about what he is choosing but may still choose it anyway. Furthermore, the judgment of such a person about the capacity of certain actions or objects to satisfy at least some of his desires may be quite correct. There are some things that may be non-morally good in that they involve the satisfaction of desires and also of appetites that are natural to the agent, but that are not conducive to the agent's long-term advantages or are not morally good. But it need not follow from this that the agent's judgment that such things are good is mistaken. There are cases in which the good as apprehended is really good, even though it is incompatible with what is morally good or required in a particular situation. For such cases, Thomas's move from requiring that the object of choice be good to the apparently weaker requirement that it be thought of as good is irrelevant. To this it might be replied that further consideration of a particular good would show its inadequacy. But, as we have already seen in discussing Thomas's notion of consideratio, further consideration of any good short of beatitude reveals its inadequacy. For with regard to any particular good, reason "can attend to the goodness there, but also to the lack of some goodness" (S.T. I-II, 13, 6c). But reason's ability to regard particular goods as good or as not-good applies not simply to non-moral goods desired by the morally weak, but also to morally good actions themselves. It will not solve Thomas's problems in this area to equate the really good with either the morally good or the prudentially good.

In order to preserve the psychological thesis, Thomas does not need to claim that the judgments of the morally weak are mistaken about what is good either morally or non-morally. For he can use the same notion of consideratio that he employs in his account of how the will is free to cover cases of moral weakness. Thus the psychological conflict that is characteristic of cases of moral weakness is a result of shifting attention from one good to another, incompatible good, to both of which the will is drawn. There may, of course, be differing amounts of deliberation and consideratio in different cases, though a certain minimum level of reason's activity is, as we have seen, necessary to establish the voluntary and sinful character of the act which results (cf. S.T. I-II, 77, 7c). It is not necessary to deny the character of being real goods to any of the objects to which appetite tends in such a situation, though ex hypothesi they fail to be the right object of choice in the situation. A particular object can be seen as good and can actually be good because it satisfies an appetite or desire; the possibility of error in these matters is neither required nor excluded in cases of moral weakness. So choice is still directed to a good, even when that good is not compatible with the moral good, and the psychological thesis is saved.

If asked why the person voluntarily chooses what is contrary to the moral good, Thomas can say that in cases of moral weakness the intellect "can attend to the goodness" present in the thing or activity chosen and that the will's choice is dependent on the presentation of the object by the intellect. When asked why the intellect attends to goodness present in an object that is incompatible with what it itself judges to be morally good or required, Thomas himself would point to the influence of sense and sensitive appetite on intellectual activity, especially with regard to particulars. On this point Thomas says: "The fact that a thing appears as good to reason which in reality is not so in a particular situation comes from the emotions" (S.T. I-II, 77, 2 ad 2). The fundamental reason why the influence of emotion or sensitive appetite is so strong in particular situations is that in Thomas's philosophy of mind both the senses and the sensitive appetites or passions are directed to particulars, just as activities or operations are, whereas intellect deals with universals. So Thomas says:

> Although general knowledge is more certain than particular knowledge, it does not play the chief role in practical judgment. In this, particular knowledge is more important because a man acts in the realm of the concrete. Little wonder, then, that in the area of the practical, emotion goes contrary to general knowledge when consideration of particulars is lacking. (S.T. I-II, 77, 2 ad 1: see S.T. I-II, 9, 2 ad 2).

But, since it is necessary that in all sins of moral weakness there must be some voluntariness, the influence of the sensitive appetite on intellect and will, and on their respective activities of consideration and choice, cannot be the whole story. This influence of the sensitive appetite, which normally diminishes, and can even in some cases completely eliminate, the voluntariness of wrong acts (S.T. I-II, 77, 7c) does not explain the voluntary choice of a lesser good over a greater, of a non-moral good, or of a morally forbidden good over a morally required good.

Here we come up against the limits of Thomas's account of the will and its freedom in regard to the anomalous phenomenon of moral weakness. For what Thomas's account, on our interpretation of it, maintains is that the voluntary choice by the will of a lesser good or a morally forbidden good is possible despite the will's direction to universal good as such and its specific direction to good proper to it as the appetite of the intellect. This choice is possible by reason of the intellect's direction of its attention to one good rather than another. Since we are dealing with sin, which, in Thomas's thought, is by definition voluntary this direction of attention or *consideratio* must be in some degree voluntary and free. So in effect Thomas proposes an account of sin and of free choice that treats free choice as an irreducible element in human activity but that at the same time integrates it into an account of the will that is mainly intellectualist. What he is doing is finding a place for an element of free choice in a teleological process of movement to ultimate goals determined by human nature and understood by human reason and then proposing an interpretation of that moment of free choice that saves his psychological thesis that all choices are of good without doing violence to our perceptions and beliefs about the moral careers and moral failures of human agents. He is not showing either that certain human actions are exempt from causal determination or that there is a causal explanation of the freedom of human agents. His account of choice and of moral weakness is then of interest mainly to those who propose to understand the moral careers of human persons in terms of an analogy with natural teleological processes and so are confronted with the problem of how it is possible for human agents to deviate from what they conceive to be a unilinear direction to the predetermined goal. To put the matter in other words, the problem that Thomas is working on here is a problem arising from his Aristotelian account of moral activity in teleological terms and from his two conceptions of will as rational appetite for the good and of sin as morally wrong voluntary activity. Within this perspective the main elements of his solution of the problem of sin work reasonably well. The criticisms we have made of his dualistic tendencies with regard to sensitive appetite and intellectual appetite and of his tendency to interpret morally wrong choices in terms of cognitive error do not strike at the heart of his account of how sin is possible.

Sins of Malice

We should observe that while Thomas holds that sin is an offense against God (S.T. I-II, 71, 6 ad 5), nearly all of his detailed treatment of sin is carried on with the use of basically Aristotelian notions of appetite and good; and very little is said about sin as obedience to God's commands or about sin in its bearing on the personal awareness of the believer in relation to God. This is not to suggest that Thomas fails to integrate his account of sin and the choice of evil into an overall theological perspective, a suggestion that could readily be refuted. But it is to say that there is little that is distinctively theological or biblical about the concepts that he employs in his account of sin. The notions that Thomas uses in his account of sin, especially his understanding of the will as intellectual or rational appetite and what we have referred to as his psychological thesis about the goodness of the will's objects of choice, commit Thomas to treating evil as a falling short of good in human activity rather than as a parallel or coordinate category to good. This, of course, harmonizes with the privation theory of evil that Thomas inherits from Augustine. In this general approach, evil is always parasitic on good both really and conceptually. Every evil exists in a good as in a subject (S.T. I, 48, 3c), and the word "evil" signifies an absence of good. (S.T. I, 48, 1c). We can compare this with the dualistic language of different realms and different ways that figures in so much of what the Bible says about sin. We can think of "the just man" and "the sinner," (Psalm 1), "the children of light" and "the children of darkness," (Luke 16:8) "the wise man" and "the fool" (Proverbs 1). We can think of the choice between death and life that Moses sets before the Israelites in his final sermon (Deuteronomy 30) or of the contrast between light and darkness that is so prominent in the Johannine corpus. What is common and important in these contrasts is the oppositions they suppose between two incompatible ways of life, the way of obedience and fidelity to God's commands and the way of disobedience and infidelity, both of which are looked on as distinct ways of life expressing different loyalties and giving rise to different forms of social interaction and systems of values. Now it is no part of our intention to argue that the moral dualism between good and evil that is so clear in our own language and so prominent and fundamental in the Bible that Thomas himself read should be raised to a metaphysical dualism of the sort propounded by the Manicheans. Rather, we suggest the difference between the understanding of sin that the Biblical contrasts intimate and Thomas's account of sin as a failure in the pursuit of attainment of one goal that is predetermined for all is important for assessing the account that Thomas gives of sins of malice and particularly of pride.

In contrast to sins of weakness, which as we have seen, Thomas attributes to the influence of the passions of the sensitive appetite on the will, sins of malice are in a special way the work of the will itself. Thomas says:

> Sometimes reason fails and one sins from ignorance; sometimes it happens when the sensual appetite prevails and one sins from emotional impulse. Neither of these is a sin from deliberate malice (certa malitia). A man sins from resolute malice only when his will on its own chooses what is evil (S.T. I-II, 78, 3c).

A sin from malice requires that there be some special disorder in the will, and normally a sin from malice is more serious than sin from passion. Thomas draws the contrast in this way:

> When one sins with deliberate malice the will itself instigates sin and it is more spontaneous than when one sins from the impulse of passion for the latter is more like an invading force. Therefore, deliberate malice increases the seriousness of sin and in direct proportion to the forcefulness of the malice. Sinfulness is diminished by the impulse of emotion and in direct proportion to the forcefulness of the emotion (S.T. I-II, 78, 4c).

Now it follows from Thomas's concept of sin as a wrongful voluntary act that sin must be in the will, whether it be a sin from malice or a sin from passion. One way of understanding the distinction that

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Thomas proposes between these two kinds of sin is to say that the difference is one of the psychological conditions under which the will makes its choice. Then Thomas, in speaking of sins from malice, is in effect claiming that the will can sin in what Butler calls "a cool hour" and that not all sins arise simply from the influence of sensitive appetite and its desires for material goods. Then the problem is to account for the possibility of a sin from malice, since both ignorance and passion are ruled out as causes of such a sin *ex hypothesi* and since "by nature the will inclines to good rather than to evil" (*S.T.* I-II, 78, 3, 3). The problem comes up clearly when we consider another passage in which Thomas elucidates the distinction between sins from passion and sins from malice by the further distinction between sinful choice and sinning by choice:

> One sinning under the impulse of emotion makes a sinful choice but does not sin by choice (*peccat quidem eligens, non tamen ex electione*). His problem is not with choice but with feeling, for if he were unmoved emotionally he would not sin. On the other hand, the man who sins with deliberate malice quite simply chooses what is evil. His problem is with the choice, and hence he is said to sin by choice (*S.T.* I-II, 78, 4 *ad* 3).

The reader's problem, if not the sinner's problem, is how such a choice of evil is possible, given Thomas's general account of will and choice. For we are no longer dealing with a situation in which lower appetites overcome higher or in which there is a cognitive or appetitive defect in the process of choice. It would seem that the will in choosing what is evil out of malice must be choosing what

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is known to be evil. The way in which Thomas describes sins of malice is more akin to the moral dualism of the Biblical tradition than it is to the teleological rationalism of Aristotle; for the Biblical tradition explicitly allows for the choice of evil over good. Thomas's account of sins of malice seems to go against his general doctrine of goodness and desire:

> Since, as we have said, to be good and to be desirable signify the same, and since evil is the opposite of good, it is out of the question that any evil as such can be directly wanted, either by natural appetite, or by animal appetite, or by intelligent appetite, which is will (S.T. I, 19, 9c).

Some further clarification of the notion of sins of malice beyond saying that they are sins from choice is thus imperative. There are five moves open to Thomas that we will consider. The first of these is to explain the notion of malice in terms of habit. This is a move that Thomas derives from Aristotle. Thus Thomas writes:

> When one sins from malice this could mean habitual malice, in the sense that Aristotle names an evil habit "malice" just as he calls a good habit a virtue. This simply means that one who sins from malice has a habitual inclination to such behaviour. The phrase could also be understood in terms of actual malice, either in the sense that the choice of evil is sometimes called malice, or in the sense that "from malice" means from previous sinfulness, as when one criticizes another's friendly gesture because of envy (S.T. I-II, 78, 1 ad 3).

Thomas holds that "whoever sins from habit sins with resolute malice" (S.T. I-II, 78, 2c). The acts that result from habitual inclinations are related to the acts that are prior to and productive of habitual inclinations as perfect or complete acts are to imperfect acts (S.T. I-II, 78, 2 ad 2). He does not think of habitual acts in this context as acts in which freedom is diminished or eliminated by reason of prior conditioning. With Aristotle he believes that the vices or bad habits of the soul are voluntary.[15] Sinning from habit is different than sinning from emotion, for Thomas holds that "habit impels the will from within; emotion from without" (S.T. I-II, 78, 4 ad 2). Habit is a permanent condition of the will, not a temporary disturbance arising from the sensitive appetite. Thus Thomas endorses the judgment of Aristotle that the intemperate man, who acts from habit, is worse than the incontinent man, who acts because of the influence of passion (S.T. II-II, 156, 3c).[16] A characteristic effect of the acquisition of a habit is the alteration of one's preferences:

> A man who is habituated in a given way inevitably finds those things delightful which have been made congenial to him by habit; by repetition and habituation they have become second nature to him. The very acquisition of a bad habit means that a man has completely lost his sensitivity to a given spiritual good. And from this it follows that such a man will choose what is spiritually evil in order to satisfy his newly acquired taste. This choice constitutes sinning with resolute malice (S.T. I-II, 78, 2c).

Thomas here leaves obscure just what the relation is between the development of habits by repetition and conditioning and his notion of habit as a condition internal to the will itself. But it is at any rate clear that for Thomas to sin from habit is to sin as the result of a stable inclination of the will. Since the inclination is stable, Thomas holds that the agent is responsible for it and that thus the agent who sins from habit sins from malice. But he does not maintain that the agent who sins from malice always sins from habit. In any event, if the habit is in the will as a result of choice, then that initial choice is not the result of habit. So he says: "It seems clear that one sins with resolute malice only if some special disorder is present, but that this disorder need not always be a habit. Hence it does not follow that whoever sins with resolute malice sins from habit" (S.T. I-II, 78, 3c).

Here Thomas is following out his general requirement that sin must have a cause beyond the ordinary principles of nature. When his denial that this cause of sin must be a habit is taken together with the distinction cited earlier between habitual malice and actual malice (S.T. I-II, 78, 1 *ad* 3), then it seems that he must allow for acts of malice that are prior to and independent of vices or habitual dispositions to sin. But in his treatment of habitual malice, which requires the occurrence of acts of malice, Thomas fails to give an account of how such acts might occur. Rather he speaks of two ways in which such choices are made:

> First, a man might have some special disposition to evil. This special disposition makes the evil object congenial to him, and for him the object seems good; for what is congenial (*conveniens*) always seems good and one tends toward it of one's own accord. A depraved disposition of this type could either be acquired through practice and become second nature, or result from a physical affliction as is the case with those who have a tendency towards certain sins because of inherited weakness. Second, a man might on his own choose what is evil when a normal restraint is removed. For example, many men desist from sin not because it displeases them but because they hope for eternal life or fear hell, and when hope gives way to despair or fear to presumption, they begin to sin with deliberate malice simply because normal inhibitions have been removed (S.T. I-II, 78, 3c).

Now these examples are not very satisfactory as illustrations of actual or non-habitual[4] malice. For the first pattern of choice presupposes either an evil habit or vice, which has already corrupted the agent's desires, or a non-voluntary and so non-moral physical disposition of the agent. In neither case does one find a human act in which the will chooses evil without a prior habit. The second pattern is less clear. What seems to be going on in the removal of inhibition that Thomas speaks of is that the agent no longer connects the action that he chooses with the ultimate end or with the loss of the ultimate end. The agent because of either presumption or despair concludes that his doing evil no longer makes a difference with regard to the loss or the attainment of the final end. So he moves to perform an action that he sees as desirable in itself but that he refrained from performing because of his beliefs about its negative connection with his last end. Now in such a situation the agent does what is bad; but it is not clear from what Thomas says here whether the action chosen is bad in itself or bad only because of its negative connection to the ultimate end. If it is the latter, as it would be in certain forms of divine command theory, then the action could be good from some point of view; and the agent's choice of it would present no special problem for Thomas's theory, since the agent in the case described would simply be omitting from consideration the negative features of the action. But then the choice would be a sinful choice (peccat eligens), not a choice of evil (peccat ex electione). If, on the other hand, the action is bad in itself, the choice would be a choice of evil;

but then it remains in conflict with Thomas's doctrine that choice is always of the good; and the conflict remains unexplained.

Thomas's use of the notion of habit, then, does not yield a satisfactory account of the notion of sins of malice, or of how the choice of evil is possible in his theory; but it does point to an important aspect of the notion of malice in persons. If we speak of a "hardened criminal" or of an obdurate sinner, part of what we mean is that a person habitually acts in certain evil ways without evidence of significant inner conflict. We think that this condition is worse than the performance of evil deeds either in isolated instances or with significant inner conflict. We also judge that such a person has lost sensitivity and responsiveness to certain kinds of good, which Thomas would call spiritual goods. It is precisely the absence of the significant inner conflict that would arise from desires for moral and religious goods that shows the extent of the person's moral degradation and at the same time makes the choice of evil routine. The notion of habit may also be used to account for the pleasure that the malicious find in certain kinds of acts.

Three other ways of elucidating the notion of sins of malice are present in a defense that Frederick Copleston offers of Thomas's doctrine that choice is always of the good. These come out rather more clearly in Copleston's exposition of Thomas than they do in Thomas himself. The moves proposed do not introduce any fundamentally new points beyond those made by Thomas, but the presentation is more continuous and more accessible to the contemporary reader than Thomas's own replies to objections. A critical assessment of Copleston's defense of Thomas may be used to illustrate some of the fundamental difficulties that confront Thomas's account of sins of malice. Copleston makes his three proposals without sharply distinguishing among them and seems to regard them as equivalent; but, as we shall see, they are different and run into different objections. Copleston argues thus:

> His [Thomas's] contention was that though a man may know that some action is wrong and yet do it, what he wills is not the evil as such but something which appears to him as desirable, and so as good, even though he may be well aware that the attainment of the apparent good involves him in moral guilt. We have to distinguish between the objectively good and the "apparently good."[17]

As we have pointed out before, the contrast between really or objectively good and apparently good is misleading in the context of the choice of evil. For it suggests that the error involved in such a choice is fundamentally cognitive, and it also implies that the goods chosen in sinful acts are necessarily not real goods. Furthermore, relying on the contrast between apparently good and objectively or really good to account for the deliberate choice of evil would be to evade the whole problem, since the cases to be explained are precisely those in which the agent knows the action to be evil but chooses to do it anyway. Copleston does not put too much weight on the notion of the apparently good; for he immediately shifts to a different contrast: that between what is completely good or good for the person as a complex whole and what is partially good or good as satisfying some one faculty or inclination or desire of the person. Copleston writes:

> The former [the objectively good] is in the context that which perfects man considered as a totality, as a human person. The good which is good merely 'apparently' is that which answers to some particular craving or desire in man but which does not perfect his nature considered as a totality. For example, a person who sets off on the path of taking a dangerous habit-forming drug does not choose what is objectively good for him as a human being; but he would never take the drug at all unless he thought of the action of taking it as in some way satisfying, as being in some way good or desirable.[18]

Here we are back with basically the same situation we encountered with sins of weakness. Something is chosen which is good in terms of at least one consideration, but not in ~~terms~~ of all considerations. It satisfies "some particular craving or desire," as Copleston puts it. But, of course, this holds true for most particular objects of choice. Some things or actions may satisfy more than one desire, e.g., a woman chooses to buy a mink coat, which satisfies her desire to keep warm and her desire to proclaim her economic status and her desire to look attractive. On Thomas's own theory, as we have already seen, it is only beatitude that completely satisfies all of one's desires or appetites. There are many objects of choice which satisfy only particular cravings or desires and which are thus real but limited goods. Assimilating the cool choice of evil to the choice of a partial good is not a very enlightening move. It may well be that some, even most, actions that are sinful involve the satisfaction of one particular craving or desire; but that is not what makes them sinful. For one can think of many innocent or good actions that involve the satisfaction of a desire or appetite. It is not clear just what actions perfect man precisely as a totality, unless we somehow identify man with his reason or his will and then argue that intellectual contemplation or morally good activity perfect man as a totality. But it is clear from our experience that such activity does not satisfy all of the desires that are normally present in human beings.

The example that Copleston gives is not simply a case of a person acting to satisfy one desire but of a person who does so in such a way that he is unable, in the normal course of events, to satisfy many other desires that are important to the successful activity of the person in society. The choice of a limited good, such as taking heroin, that is causally incompatible with a wide range of other goods and that is almost certain to stand in the way of one's meeting with the obligations of one's life in society is wrong. But the problem with such a good is neither its partial character nor its failure to satisfy the person as a whole but rather its incompatibility with other goods, some of which are mandatory. (Mere incompatibility with other goods will obviously not be enough to make an action wrong. Thus it may be good for me to marry Ethel, and it may be also good for me to marry Edith. But, given the notion of marriage in our law, I cannot marry both Ethel and Edith. From this it does not follow that my marrying Ethel is wrong or sinful.) As we shall see, there are some indications that Thomas would be willing to accept this line of argument, although he does not bring it clearly into focus. It is of interest to us to note that Copleston in interpreting this example speaks of taking heroin as satisfying a need or desire and neglects the psychological problems connected with the fascination of what is forbidden and destructive. Thus he writes:

> He may believe that to take heroin is morally wrong and yet do it; but he would not start the habit (which he may afterwards, of course, be unable to break by himself) unless he thought of the action as 'perfecting' his nature in some way. Objectively it does not do so; and the man may know this. But the fact remains that the action is felt to answer some need."[19]

Another approach that Copleston suggests for handling the problem of the choice of evil is to distinguish what is chosen directly and what is chosen indirectly. Here he is in effect translating a distinction that Thomas draws between what is chosen _per se_ or for itself and what is chosen _per accidens_ or by reason of its connection to something else (see _S.T._ I, 19, 9c). Copleston gives the following summary of Thomas's use of this distinction:

> What the fornicator seeks, Aquinas contends, is a pleasure, something positive which answers to an instinctive craving. He may know that fornication is morally wrong and not objectively good, and in this case he is involved in moral guilt. But though he may know that the action is evil or morally bad, he does not choose the evil or badness as such. At least he does not choose it directly. What he chooses directly is a pleasure, though he can be said to choose evil indirectly, inasmuch as he chooses to do an action which is morally bad and which he may know to be morally bad.[20]

Here we are dealing with the familiar situation of an object of choice that is not good from every point of view (_secundum omnem considerationem_), but is good from at least one point of view. So it can be chosen freely. More specifically, it is good in that it provides pleasure and bad in that it is morally wrong. The distinction between what is chosen directly and what is chosen indirectly is one that cuts across the distinction between sinning from malice and sinning from emotion. Thus, in the case of fornication the sinner may be influenced by sensitive appetite and its emotions; or he may be making a considered choice of evil without the influence of emotion, which would diminish the voluntariness of his action. In the cases where the sinner makes a considered choice of evil, on this interpretation he does so only indirectly. Thomas makes this explicit in the following passage:

> Evil is never intended for its own sake, but only that some other evil may be avoided, or some other good be achieved, as pointed out above. In such cases one would prefer to enjoy the intended good and not suffer the loss of the other good if such is possible. The lustful man, indeed, would prefer to enjoy himself without offending, but when he has to make a choice of one or the other, he is willing to sin and offend God rather than be deprived of his pleasure (S.T. I-II, 78, 1 ad 2).

The distinction between direct and indirect choice here goes with what sounds like an early version of economically rational man, and sins of malice are interpreted as a persistent adherence to one good along with persistent acceptance of the loss of another good. It is doubtful whether this gives an adequate account of sins of malice. We can recall Thomas's own characterization of sinning from choice: "The man who sins with deliberate malice quite simply chooses what is evil (secundum se eligit malum). His problem is with the choice and hence he is said to sin by choice" (S.T. I-II, 78, 4 ad 3). The thesis that evil is chosen only indirectly is intended by Thomas to apply to every agent, both natural and rational:

> Nevertheless an evil is desired indirectly as resulting from a good. And this appears in every kind of appetite. For no natural agent intends privation or destruction, but a form of

> good . . . . No one would desire evil, not even indirectly, unless the concomitant good were more desired than the good of which the evil is deprivation (S.T. I, 19, 9c).

Thomas's view in effect turns a sin of malice into a preference for one kind of good as against another. For such a view even to begin to account for sins of malice, one would need to have an account of just why certain goods are linked to certain deprivations (e.g., why the pleasure of fornication is linked to the moral evil of the act); this is especially necessary when the links are not primarily logical (e.g., where one's marrying Ethel deprives one of the good of marrying Edith). Second, one needs an account of the obligatory character of certain goods, that is, of those goods the absence of which is held to be morally unacceptable and so evil and sinful. For clearly the fact that a chosen course of action deprives one of goods does not suffice to make the course of action sinful; the fact that my writing this dissertation deprives me of time on the beaches of Ft. Lauderdale does not make my writing the dissertation wrong. We shall see that Thomas does offer some indication of answers to these two questions.

But first we should notice the consequences of radical counter-examples for the theses that only good can be directly chosen and that evil can only be chosen indirectly. Copleston discusses such counter-examples in the following passage:

> But it is possible for a man to go about looking for evil to do. This is at least a conceivable case. Aquinas would presumably reply that such a man does not directly choose evil as such, that is to say, a privation, but that he seeks primarily the satisfaction of some impulse or drive, the psychological

> origins of which may be hidden from the man himself.[21]

This is one way of defending Thomas's thesis that choice is always of the good. But it has two features that make it unattractive. The first is that it requires that in these extreme cases where the agent professes to aim at evil we must override the agent's own description of what he chooses directly. Since Thomas's own concept of the will is of a faculty that chooses its object as this is presented to it by reason, Copleston's resort to a hidden impulse or drive seems to fit better with Freudian than with Thomistic psychology. The appeal to unacknowledged and unknown factors in order to save Thomas's original thesis is not a persuasive move, and reveals a certain desperation in the face of counter-examples.

The second difficulty is more fundamental. It is that adopting this sort of defense for Thomas's psychological thesis threatens to cut the connections between good as that which is chosen and good as the class of objects that correspond to the various inclinations and appetites of human persons. If good is identified simply with the object of choice, then the necessary truth of the psychological thesis is apparent; for no one can choose anything that is not an object of choice. This view goes with an understanding of will as an indifferent power of decision and makes the goodness of the object a consequence of its being willed or chosen. Anything, no matter how eccentric or vile or disastrous, counts as good once it is chosen. But such a view, while it saves the psychological thesis, is at variance with Thomas's general account of goodness as a characteristic of the class of those objects that correspond to the various human powers, inclinations and appetites and that thus somehow perfect or bring to completion the human person. For on this second view goodness is prior ~~to choice~~; it moves and motivates the will to its activity. Here we come to the nub of the problem. For Thomas relies on the goodness of the object as presented by the intellect to the will to move the will to activity in the manner of a final cause, without which the will will not act; and so it must be present in the object to be chosen as the intellect conceives it. But Thomas also wants to use the notion of goodness as a discriminatory notion, that is, to pick out some possibilities of action for commendation and correlatively to reject other possibilities of action by withholding commendation. It is characteristic of Thomas's approach that the basis of commendation is that the action or the object of choice stands in a fulfilling or perfecting relation to one or more of the various human powers and appetites. Now it is obvious from human experience and it is also common ground to all, both Thomists and non-Thomists, who participate in this discussion, that, when goodness is understood in this way, human agents do not always choose good but may and often do choose things that for one reason or another fall outside the range of fulfilling possibilities of action. Furthermore, it is common ground that such failures are not simply the result of ignorance, of the agent's failure to understand that the objects chosen fall outside the range of fulfilling possibilities of action. Copleston's defense of Thomas attempts to reconcile this second view of goodness with the psychological thesis by arguing that a person whose choice deliberately and knowingly falls outside the range of fulfilling possibilities is still acting to satisfy some unknown "impulse or drive." So his action does still fall within the range of fulfilling possibilities. But if we allow unknown impulses or drives to count in the class of human powers and inclinations, the fulfillment of which is good, then it is clear that the discriminatory function of the notion of goodness breaks down, and we can no longer use it to make reasonable commendations of courses of action. "X is good" comes very close to "X is the sort of thing you like, if you like that sort of thing."

Basically, Copleston's defense of Thomas's psychological thesis against counter-examples attempts to provide an object that is good in the second sense of being a possibility fulfilling a faculty or appetite that can be the object of the direct choice of the will, while the evil aimed at by the agent is relegated to the place of being indirectly chosen. If we reject Copleston's defense, then it seems that either the psychological thesis will have to be abandoned or a new account will have to be provided for sins of malice.

The last possibility that we shall examine as a basis for an account of sins of malice that preserves the psychological thesis is the one that is most commonly used by Thomas himself. It is the contrast between spiritual and temporal goods. As we have already seen, Thomas regards sins of malice as arising from a defect in the will itself, rather than in the intellect or the sense appetite. He describes the defect in the will in the following terms:

> Lack of order can be ascribed to the human will when it loves a lesser good too much. Furthermore, when one loves a thing less, one is willing to suffer its loss if a greater good is in jeopardy, e.g., a man is willing to suffer the loss of a hand or foot in order to save his life. Thus it happens that when a disordered will loves the goods of this world (bonum temporale), e.g., riches or pleasure, too ardently, beyond the measure compatible with reason, divine law, and the love of God, one is willing to suffer the loss of spiritual goods in order to acquire temporalities. Evil is nothing more than the lack of an appropriate good. Thus, one knowingly wills spiritual evil, which is evil in the true sense since it is the privation of spiritual good, when one prefers the temporal good. And a person is said to sin purposely and with resolute malice when he knowingly chooses evil (S.T. I-II, 78, 1c).

Here Thomas seems to be starting with a notion of preference, of what it is to desire or love one thing more than another. One's willingness to give up some goods rather than others shows which goods one prefers or loves more. (Thomas here leaves to the side the whole question of the probability of attaining the various goods desired.) Then the claim is that the sinner or his disordered will is willing to give up a spiritual good rather than a temporal good. This presupposes a situation of conflict or incompatibility between the two goods. But it is unclear just what the basis of this conflict or incompatibility is. Thomas's point here is not to propose a preference for temporal goods over spiritual goods as an independent means of determining whether or not an action is sinful. Such a criterion would be difficult to apply for reasons that have already been mentioned. Also, it would be hard to reconcile with his acceptance of the traditional division of sins into spiritual and carnal (S.T. I-II, 72, 2c) and his view that spiritual sins are more serious than carnal sins (S.T. I-II, 73, 5c); though it might be possible by distinguishing between temporal and carnal to maintain that even spiritual sins involve a preference for temporal goods over spiritual goods. But if temporal goods are not to be identified with carnal goods, which are presumably the objects of the sensitive appetite, it is hard to offer an understanding of the notion of temporal good that does not place spiritual good outside of time and this world. In that case, the contrast between temporal and spiritual goods would not have useful application to most of the choices that human beings make in this life. Rather, the way to understand Thomas's point here is to see it as an effort to account for the possibility of the knowing and deliberate choice of evil by proposing that sin, which is such a choice of evil, is really the choice of temporal good over spiritual good. Since sin, as we have seen earlier, is both an offense against God and against reason and nature, it necessarily is an evil. Thomas's psychological thesis requires that the object chosen in a sinful choice be itself a good; but, since the choice in a sinful act is evil, the good chosen in the sin necessarily brings with it the privation of a spiritual good; it is necessarily incompatible with "reason, divine law and the love of God." The argument is not that the choice of a temporal good is a sin because it is incompatible with a spiritual good; but rather that it is incompatible with a spiritual good because it is a sin.

Thomas here, as his reply to the second objection makes plain, is relying on the distinction between what is directly chosen and what is indirectly chosen. Thus he writes:

> Evil is never intended for its own sake, but only that some other evil be avoided or some other good be achieved, as was

> pointed out above. In such cases one would prefer to enjoy the intended good and not suffer the loss of the other good if such were possible. The lustful man, indeed, would prefer to enjoy himself without offending God, but when he has to make a choice of one or the other, he is willing to sin and offend God rather than be deprived of his pleasures (S.T. I-II, 78, 1 ad 2).

This in effect restricts a sin of malice to the deliberate preference for the good chosen in a sinful act, which because it is a sinful act has evil or privation of a spiritual good as a necessary concomitant. A sin of malice, then, differs from a sin of weakness caused by emotion mainly in its persistence and deliberateness. The lustful man chooses the good that he desires while knowing that it lacks the spiritual good that should be present in human activity. This way of interpreting Thomas leaves it unclear, at least in this context, just why some temporal goods suffer from this lack of spiritual goodness, or, to put it in slightly different terms, just why some choices of goods are sinful. On this account of sins of malice, there is no turning to evil for its own sake, nor is there any aversion to good as such. The agent who sins from malice simply prefers the lower or temporal good to the higher or spiritual good. Simple preference for one good over another does not seem adequate as an account of sin, unless we assume that the good that is not preferred is somehow obligatory. To prefer eating an ice cream cone to saying a prayer may be a sign of an imperfect and plebeian character, but it hardly counts as a sin of malice. Thomas's account of sins of malice in terms of preference for temporal goods is incomplete without at least some consideration of the obligatory status of certain spiritual goods under some conditions. It is also seriously incomplete without a precise account of the distinction between spiritual and temporal goods; this account will have to avoid the problems of evaluative dualism that would arise from identifying spiritual goods with the objects of the intellectual appetite and temporal goods with the objects of the sensitive appetite.

This way of interpreting sins of malice is consistent with Thomas's psychological thesis that choice is always of the good; but it fails to capture what Thomas himself speaks of as sin by choice, in which "the man who sins with deliberate malice quite simply chooses what is evil" (S.T. I-II, 78, 4 ad 3). It suggests that in sinning the agent simply prefers the lower good even though he knows that this entails the loss of the higher good, but that the agent would really prefer to have both goods if that were possible. But surely it is possible that the agent does not want the higher good and that, while moral virtue, for instance, or the contemplation of God will satisfy certain powers and appetites that he has, this higher good is not an actual object of desire for him and may in fact produce aversion in him. It may be argued that an agent who failed to desire all possible good would be irrational. But there are two different situations ~~that~~ should be distinguished: a) the situation in which the agent fails to desire some good available to him that he recognizes to be good for him, b) the situation in which the agent fails to desire some good available to him that is good for him because it satisfies or fulfills some power or appetite that he has as a person but that he fails to recognize as a good for him. It is only in the first situation that the agent himself would find an inconsistency between his acknowledging an object's goodness and his failing to desire it or be attracted to it; and it is only in the first situation that the agent would feel the need of some further distinction or explanation, e.g., "It's good, but it's not what I want now," or "I like it, but I'm too tired even to think about it." But in the second situation the agent will not experience such a need for explanation, since he does not acknowledge that the object in question is good. External observers may have a need for some explanation of why, if the object really is a good for him and really does satisfy his powers or appetites, he fails to desire it. But there is no necessity for a human agent actually to desire all those things that can satisfy his powers or appetites. (There is obviously no necessity for him to choose all of them.) What we suspect is that in attempting to account for sins of malice in terms of a preference for temporal goods over spiritual goods, Thomas is in effect assimilating sins of malice to sins of weakness, for which he can offer a fairly satisfactory account consistent with the psychological thesis that choice is always of the good. The difference between sins of weakness and sins of malice then lies not in the objects chosen but in the psychological conditions under which the choice is made with sins of weakness occurring as the result of gusts of passion and sins of malice occurring in a cool hour.

A further difficulty confronts this way of understanding sins of malice in terms of preference for temporal over spiritual goods. The source of this difficulty is theological and has to do with the problem of sin in the angels, who are, in Thomas's view, immaterial, intelligent beings (_S.T._ I, 50, 1c). They were created in a state of probation in which they did not enjoy the beatific vision of God's essence (_S.T._ I, 62, 1c), and in which they were capable of sin (_S.T._ I, 63, 1c). The angels who sinned in this preliminary condition are devils (_daemones_). They are evil by their free choice, for Thomas denies that there are any beings that are evil by nature or by natural inclination (_S.T._ I, 63, 4c). Thomas holds that the devils can be guilty of all kinds of sin by leading men to sin, but that they themselves are only inclined to spiritual sins. Thomas writes: "But by inclination they can only sin in ways to which a spiritual nature can be attracted. Now such a nature cannot be attracted by satisfactions that are found in the body as such, but only by such as are spiritual; for nothing can be attracted by whatever does not, in some way, correspond to its nature" (_S.T._ I, 63, 2c). However, according to the psychological thesis, desire is always of the good. So it seems that the object of the angel's desire or inclination must be good. Since the angel has no inclination to temporal or carnal goods, his sin is not to be accounted for as a preference for temporal goods over spiritual goods. Furthermore, Thomas explicitly rules out the possibility of an angel's being in error or ignorance with regard to the good (_S.T._ I, 63, 1 _ad_ 4). So Thomas confronts a problem:

> But how can there be sin in desiring spiritual satisfactions? In one way only, namely by not observing the measure imposed by a higher will than one's own. And this precisely is the sin of pride -- not to submit to one's superior where submission is

> due. Therefore the first sin in an angel can only have been pride" (S.T. I, 63, 2c).

The object chosen by an angel is good in itself and does not have a spiritual evil necessarily connected to it as some temporal goods do in Thomas's view. So Thomas, to account for the sin of the angels, falls back on the Biblical contrast between obedience and disobedience to the superior, i.e., God.

Thomas confronts a similar problem in the case of the sin of Adam, which he does not regard as either a sin of weakness or of ignorance and which he cannot explain in terms of a preference for temporal over spiritual good. He proposes this account of Adam's sin:

> Now man was so established in the state of innocence that there was no rebellion of the flesh against the spirit. Hence the first disorder of human desire could not have [been][22] the result of desiring a sensible attraction, which the concupiscence of the flesh craves out of the order of reason. It remains, therefore, that it must have resulted from inordinate desire for some spiritual attraction. It would not have been inordinate had he desired it according to the measure appointed by divine rule. We are left with the conclusion that the first sin lay in this, that man craved for a non-material good above his measure, which is a function of pride. Therefore it is clear that the first human sin was pride (S.T. II-II, 163, 1c).

The sin of Adam then as well as the sin of the angels, on Thomas's own account, both serve as counter-examples to his account of sins of malice in terms of a preference for temporal goods over spiritual goods. For both these sins are, in Thomas's view, sins of malice that involve a knowing choice of evil (S.T. I-II, 78, 1c). So we can see that this fifth manner of accounting for sins of malice in a way that is consistent with the psychological thesis that choice is always of the good also breaks down.

Furthermore, we would maintain that Thomas's own account of the sin of the angels and of the sin of Adam ultimately requires a consideration of God's commands as determinative for the moral goodness or badness of acts. Thomas explicitly rules out ignorance and conflicting desires of the sensitive appetite as causes of sin in both these cases. Because of the psychological thesis, Thomas does not want to maintain that what is chosen in these sinful acts is itself something wrong; and so, in order to preserve the psychological thesis, he is forced to fall back on a divine command theory of moral goodness and badness to handle these cases.

Thus in discussing the sin of the angels, Thomas says:

> The other way in which sin can occur through free choice is by the choice of something good in itself, but without due regard to a measure or rule. In this case the fault that makes the action wrong lies all in the choosing itself (_ex parte electionis_): it is this that is out of order, not the thing chosen; for example, a man might choose to pray without heed to some ruling of the Church . . . . It was thus that an angel sinned: of his own free will he pursued a good for himself without regard for the rule of the divine will (_S.T._ I, 63, 1 _ad_ 4).

It is not clear that the sin described here as a sin of disobedience that involves a defect in the act of choice would count as a sin of malice in which "the man who sins with deliberate malice quite simply chooses what is evil . . . and is said to sin by choice" (_S.T._ I-II, 78, 4 _ad_ 4). On the one hand, the sin of the angels is not caused by a defect of intellect or of sensitive appetite; and so it seems that on Thomas's principles, it must arise from a defect of the will or rational appetite (_S.T._ I-II, 78, 1c). But, as we have seen, sins arising from a defect of the will Thomas regards as sins of malice. On the other hand, what is in question as the object of the will's activity in the case of the fallen angels is itself good and is known to be such. Since the object of choice is not evil, it seems that the sin of the angels is not strictly a sin of malice. On Thomas's account of what this sin consists in, the object desired is neither an evil nor an inferior good but rather a good that is too lofty for the creature that desires it. Thomas says:

> There is no doubt that an angel did sin by desiring to be as God . . . . He wanted to have ultimate bliss simply and solely of himself; and this is uniquely God's prerogative. . . . The devil's sin was also a desire for dominion over things, and in this sense too a perverse aspiration to godlikeness (S.T. I, 63, 3c).

What is evil here for Thomas is not the desire to be like God; for in Thomas's view, all creatures, even irrational ones, have some likeness to God as their last end. He writes:

> For God is the ultimate end for all things without exception . . . they (non-rational creatures) come to their final end through sharing in some likeness of God, inasmuch as they actually exist, or live, and even know after their fashion (S.T. I-II, 1, 8c) (See S.T. II-II, 34, 1 ad 3).

So it is not the object of will that is itself bad, whether it be desired by men or angels or even in some obscure way by irrational creatures. The problem, both in the sin of the angels and in the sin of Adam, is that there is a defect in some relational aspect of the good desired, either because the good desired for some reason is incompatible with or inappropriate to the being that desires it or because the desire for the good is not subject to God's rule or command. Thus Thomas writes of the devil and Adam: "Indeed both devil and man wanted to be equal with God in some respect; each scorned the order of divine government by choosing to rely on himself instead" (_S.T._ II-II, 163, 2c). Thomas goes on to observe that "the sin is not in simply wanting to be like God by knowledge, but in wanting inordinately, that is, above one's measure" (_S.T._ II-II, 163, 2 _ad_ 2). It seems to us that desiring knowledge beyond one's measure in this context can mean either desiring knowledge that one cannot have because of the limitation of one's nature or desiring knowledge that God does not choose to give to one, and that Thomas does not sharply distinguish between these two possibilities. At this point perhaps disobedience to the God who creates one's nature and lack of conformity to the limits of one's nature come to the same thing. But it seems from Thomas's views on the seriousness of the sin of pride that disobedience is the more fundamental notion. Thomas argues from the distinction between conversion to good and aversion from God which, as we saw, he regards as aspects of any serious sin:

> There are two sides to sin, the turning to a creaturely good, which is like the material of sin, and the turning away from the uncreated good, which is like the form constituting and completing the quality of sinfulness. If we consider the turning towards an object (_conversionis_) there is no reason why pride should be the greatest of sins, for the loftiness it inordinately craves is not in its very notion incompatible with moral value. If we consider the turning away (_aversionis_), however, there we discover its extreme gravity, for whereas by other sins man moves away from God out of ignorance or

> indulgence in an alternative good, by pride he turns directly against God because he wills not to be subject to him and his rule (S.T. II-II, 162, 6c).

Since the good aimed at in pride is likeness to God, the evil in a sin of pride does not come from the object to which one turns, but from the turning away from God. Thomas's account of pride is paradoxical, for it makes God both the object of conversion and the object of aversion. The root of the paradox is, we would suggest, the tension between the Biblical frame of reference in which the rejection of God and the choice of evil are possibilities always open to the human agent and the psychological thesis deriving from Aristotle that choice is always of a good. In the Biblical frame of reference, it is to be expected that sinners will reject God, will serve idols, and will do bad things of various kinds. Thomas does not propose to contradict any of these beliefs, but he has to interpret them along lines compatible with the psychological thesis.

A peculiarity of the sin of pride, on Thomas's account of it, is that it involves a desire for real good, i.e., likeness to God, along with either erroneous belief concerning the conditions of that good or rejection of the conditions. The conditions in question have to do with either the limits or the source of the good that is desired. Thus Thomas follows Gregory the Great in distinguishing four species of pride: to think that one's good is from oneself, to presume that what is given from above is owing to our own merits, to boast of having what one has not, and to despise others and wish to appear the exclusive possessors of what we have (S.T. II-II, 162, 4c). A moment's reflection shows that each of these kinds of pride involves a false claim about the conditions of the good one desires, and Thomas himself points to the fact "boastfulness is counted as a sort of lying by falsely crediting oneself with what one does not have" (S.T. II-II, 162, 4 ad 2). But the false claim is the result of the inordinate desire for one's excellence, not its cause; for otherwise pride would become a sin of ignorance. Thus Thomas infers the inordinate desire from the false claim as we can see in the following passage:

> First, the good in itself; here obviously the greater it is, the more superior the man who has it. But if a man claims for himself more worth than he has, his appetite will be set on what is beyond his measure (S.T. II-II, 162, 4c).

This involves a defect of will, the unwillingness of the creature to accept its actual limited condition, and so counts as a sin of malice in Thomas's threefold division of the internal causes of sin. But pride, while it may manifest itself in such immoral actions as lying and making deceptive claims, seems to be in itself little more than an irrational attitude. In Thomas's own words: "Now right reason requires that a man should reach out to what is proportionate to him. Consequently pride clearly implies something adverse to right reason" (S.T. II-II, 162, 1c). An aspiration to a good beyond one's nature may be irrational, even foolish; but it does not really capture what we have in mind when we think of "sins of malice" or what Christians have traditionally thought to be the moral enormity of the sin of the angels and of the sin of Adam. The notion of pride as desire for what lies beyond one's creaturely station only applies to sins of such gravity when it is supplemented by the further notions of contempt and disobedience for the Creator. Thomas himself says, "To be turned away from God and his commandments, which is like a consequence to other sins, is the essential point of pride, the act of which is the contempt of God" (S.T. II-II, 162, 6c).

This rejection of God is, of course an attitude present in the Biblical conception of sin. But it is difficult to combine with the psychological thesis and with Thomas's doctrine that God essentially is the supreme and original instance of goodness, to which all things tend (See S.T. I, 6, 2c). As we have seen, for Thomas the gravity of the sin of pride lies precisely in the formal element of aversion from God that it involves. It is not clear just how the explicit aversion from God that is necessary if the irrational attitude of pride is really to account for sins of malice is possible. Thomas proposes the following response to the question of how it is possible to hate God:

> In his essence God is unqualified goodness and no one could hate that since the very idea of goodness calls up love. Who sees God in his essence then could never hate him. And even some of his effects are of a kind that could never be in opposition to human willing. Being, living, and knowing are like that, desirable and lovable to all. When God is understood as the author of such things who could ever hate him? However, other effects of his do stand against an unruly will. Punishment is an example, and so is sin's interdict by divine law. These things simply affront a man whose will is caught in sin's depravity. To the degree that they dwell on such effects some can hate God. They hate him because he forbids sin and deals out punishment (S.T. II-II, 34, 1c).

Here we notice that Thomas has simplified his problem a good deal. He affirms man's inability to reject God once his essence is seen and also his inability to reject certain general kinds of goods, to which he holds the human agent has a necessary and natural inclination. Then he begins to talk of the opposition between God as law-giver and judge and a human will already depraved by sin. Now it is true that because of one's past offenses and present dispositions one may come to hate a good law-giver and judge; and Thomas's remarks may well hold for the great majority of those sinners who do come to hate God. But it will not do for those cases where there is ex hypothesi no previous sin, the sin of the angels and the sin of Adam. The root of the problem here is that, in Thomas's moral psychology, hatred is a response to what is perceived as distasteful and harmful and therefore evil. "Evil is the object of hatred" (S.T. I-II, 29, 1c). This is the opposite side of the view contained in the psychological thesis: just as good is the object of love and desire and choice, evil is the object of hatred and aversion. So the only basis for rejecting or hating God in Thomas's view is that he is somehow evil or harmful to the agent. So the hardened sinner who desires things forbidden by God and fears punishment can come to hate God but there is no account of how a clear-headed rejection of God by a person with a will not previously corrupted is possible.

But, as we have already argued, Thomas needs the possibility of aversion and hatred for God to account for the evil in the sin of pride, which consists in its formal element of aversion from God. He also needs some account of how such an aversion is possible in order to account for the theological cases of the sin of the angels and of the sin of Adam and to account for the Biblical assumption that clear-headed hatred of God is indeed a possibility for human agents (e.g., John 15:24).

Thomas goes on to assume that direct aversion and hatred for God is really a possibility, and is indeed the most serious of all sins. He says:

> Thus the guilt of sin lies in the voluntary turning away from God which is directly implied in hating him. In other sins it is implied only indirectly and by a certain sharing. What we love we cling to directly; so we directly repulse what we hate. Thus when someone hates God his will turns directly away from him. In other sins, as in fornication for example, one does not turn away from God directly, but rather indirectly. Connected with fornication is a turning from God, to be sure, but only through the desire for pleasure. Now since the direct is always more important than the indirect, hatred of God is worse than other sins (S.T. II-II, 34, 3c).

Here Thomas allows a direct voluntary aversion from God, an aversion that is not the result of a desire for some lesser good which is for some reason incompatible with God's goodness. But in the previous question where he grants that it is possible for a moral agent to hate God, what he really admits is that it is possible for a moral agent to hate God indirectly because of his desire for a good obtainable by a sinful act or because of his aversion to the evils inflicted by divine punishment. What Thomas holds in the passage under consideration is that hatred for God is a voluntary direct aversion; but he fails to show how, given the conception of the will and of good that is present in the psychological thesis, such a direct aversion to the supreme and original good is possible.

We maintain that sins of malice do occur and that the clear-headed choice of known evil is possible for human persons. We ob-

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serve, also, that Thomas, for various theological reasons, has to allow this possibility. We further maintain that this is a possibility that is not really compatible with his moral psychology and, particularly, with what we have been calling the psychological thesis, namely, that the object of choice is always a good. The various moves that Thomas and his followers make in order to preserve the psychological thesis and the possibility of the choice of evil in sins of malice are, we hope to have shown, ultimately unsatisfactory, since despite initial appearances, they do not really allow for the deliberate choice of evil. These moves in general tend to reduce sins of malice to sins of weakness, in which the lesser good is chosen over the greater. Thomas does not wish to deny that sins of malice can occur, but his commitment to the psychological thesis causes him to offer inadequate and misleading accounts both of the deliberate choice of evil and of the sins of pride and hatred of God. His commitment to the psychological thesis that choice is always of a good, which, as we have seen, derives from Aristotle, is the consequence of two other positions that also derive from Aristotle. The first is the conception of the will as rational appetite. "Willing is rational appetition, and there is no appetition except for a good" (S.T. I-II, 8, 1c). Choice as an activity of the will is always directed to one good or another which falls under the object of will which is good in general (See S.T. I-II, 13, 2c). The second is the requirement that the object be good in order to account for the will's being moved from potentiality to actuality in the choice of a particular thing. In the absence of a good, the will is not moved to activity, and so choice cannot occur, since "that which is potential is made actual by that which is itself actual" (S.T. I-II, 9, 1c).[23]

The primary object of the will is the end or goal; and it is by virtue of its active intention of the end that it can actually choose a means. Thomas says:

> The will is not both mover and moved under the same aspect, and so not simultaneously actual and potential in the same phase. It is actually willing an end that it brings itself from potentiality to actuality with regard to willing objects for that end (S.T. I-II, 9, 3 *ad* 1).

By restricting the free activity of the will to means and to particular goods that fall under the notion of good in general, Thomas is able to offer an account of free choice that does not require the will to move itself from potentially choosing to actually choosing in a way that would violate the Aristotelian doctrine of the temporal priority of actuality to potentiality. We will not attempt to assess Thomas's use of this Aristotelian doctrine in his account of human voluntary activity; we merely point out that denying the psychological thesis to allow for the deliberate choice of evil would require either abandoning the doctrine of the priority of actuality to potentiality, or granting that the will is actually directed to a general object that is somehow indifferent between good and evil. This would overturn the whole relationship that Thomas maintains between appetites or inclinations and goods as the objects of these appetites and inclinations. Thomas could allow the object of our choices in general to be inclusive of both good and evil if he would make a sharp distinction between will as the appetite of the intellect for goods appropriate to it and will as the power of choice regulating all appetites and inclinations. As we have already seen in Chapter II, Thomas does not make such a sharp distinction. If he did make such a distinction, Thomas could maintain a logical relationship between the appetite of the intellect and the goods it desires while at the same time he could have the power of decision actively intending a general object that would include both good and evil. In this approach, the will could choose an evil by virtue of its intention of the general object of the will without violating the Aristotelian doctrine of the priority of actuality to potentiality since the will could be postulated to be in actuality with regard to such a general object. But Thomas explicitly rejects the proposal that the object of will be conceived so as to include both good and evil, when he writes:

> A rational power is not prepared to deal with opposites of every sort, but with those only which are comprehended within its own proper object, for no ability is set on any other than the instant interest corresponding to it. Now the object of volition is a being good (bonum) (S.T. I-II, 8, 1 ad 2).

Allowing the will to be directed to a general object that is not characterized as either good or bad seems to give up even the minimal characterization of the object of the will that Thomas's position provides (namely, that it is good), and seems to reduce it to a formal and empty notion. But, unlike Thomas's position, it accords to the will both the capacity deliberately to choose evil and the actual making of that choice.

The point that Thomas's own approach asserts firmly is the closeness of the connection between goodness and rationality. Deliberately to choose evil is not, as Thomas's view would require, an impossible act such that where it seems to occur must be reinterpreted so as to be an instance of the choice of a lesser good; rather, it is always an irrational act. Deliberately to choose evil, understanding this as Thomas does, so as to refer to non-moral evil as well as moral evil, without regard to beneficial consequences or to greater evils that are being avoided, is irrational. If the choice of evil is to form part of a plan of life or to be the object of consistent choices, it must in some way take on some of the logical relations and functions of what we normally term "good." Milton's Satan illustrates this when he says to Beelzebub:

> Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable
> Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,
> To do ought good never will be our task,
> But ever to do ill our sole delight,
> As being the contrary to his high will
> Whom we resist. If then his Providence
> Our of our evil seek to bring forth good,
> Our labour must be to pervert that end,
> And out of good still to find means of evil.[24]

Satan here in disobedience to God sets himself to do moral and probably also non-moral evil; but even in setting this as his objective, he works within the conceptual framework of striving for an end that is understood and that is somehow perceived to be a source of satisfaction or delight. As Satan later says when he rejects the possibility of submission to God and confirms himself in evil:

> Farewell Remorse: all Good to me is lost;
> Evil be thou my Good; by thee at least

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> Divided Empire with Heav'ns King I hold
> By thee, and more than half perhaps will reigne;
> As Man ere long, and this new World shall know.[25]

The point here is that, even in what the poet intends to be a deliberate, clear-headed choice of evil and an expression of the highest degree of malevolence and the hatred of God, the only way to make this choice intelligible as shaping a way of life that even an evil person could choose is to describe it in the language of goods and goals. Satan thus is said to make evil his good. We are not arguing that Milton's language here shows that evil can only be chosen if it is somehow seen as a good. This is a line that a Thomist might be tempted to take and that would, in the long run, reduce sins of malice to sins of ignorance. Rather, we are using Milton's language to illustrate our view that the deliberate choice of evil is irrational, though possible, and that the only way to present it as somehow intelligible and coherent is to borrow the connections that good normally has with striving to a goal and finding satisfaction in its attainment. This borrowing is not merely linguistic, a simple device for making the choice of evil dramatically comprehensible. It may also occur in the life of a human moral agent, as he actually comes to find satisfaction in striving for and attaining deliberately chosen evils. He may then choose to persist in this way of life because of the satisfactions which it offers and which habit has made congenial to him. This is the situation that Thomas has in mind when he speaks of sinning from habitual malice:

> The very acquisition of a bad habit means that a man has completely lost his sensitivity to a given spiritual good. And

> from this it follows that such a man will choose what is spiritually evil in order to satisfy his newly acquired taste. This choice constitutes sinning with resolute malice (certa malitia). Therefore, it is clear that whoever sins from habit sins with resolute malice (S.T. I-II, 78, 2c).

In such a case, one can interpret the sins that occur after the formation of the habit as involving the preference for a lesser or lower good over a greater or higher good; but, as we have argued in the second section of this chapter, Thomas does not have a satisfactory account of the deliberate choice of evil prior to the formation of a such a habit. He needs such an account in order to handle certain cases within his own theological system, notably the sin of the angels and the sin of Adam. He also needs such an account in order to meet the criticisms of those of us who believe that the deliberate, clear-headed choice of evil is possible. The main barrier to his offering such an account is the psychological thesis that choice is always of a good, which does yield at least an initially plausible account of sins of weakness, but which produces in Thomas a strong tendency, a tendency that he does not consistently resist, to reduce sins of malice to sins of weakness or sins of ignorance.

Footnotes to Chapter III

[1] But in S.T. II-II, 154, 3c, Thomas argues that the seriousness of a sin depends on its kind, which is determined by the good to which it is opposed. In such a view, the species of the act is determined not by the good one turns to, but by the good one turns away from.

[2] For the basic texts setting forth Thomas's views on the difficult subject of the classification of actions, consult S.T. I-II, 18, 6 and 7.

[3] "Ultimate" corresponds to nothing in the Latin text; according to Thomas, any ordering or directing of means to an end is the work of reason, as the Latin text affirms (see S.T. I-II, 17, 3c).

[4] See John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, II. 2.13.

[5] See Augustine, The City of God, XIV. 28.

[6] For instance, Karl Rahner, "On the Question of a Formal Existential Ethics," in Theological Investigations, Vol. II, tr. Karl H. Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon, 1963), pp. 217-234.

[7] Augustine, The City of God, XIV. 28.

[8] See Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, IX. 4. 1166a31-32; IX. 9. 1170b6-7.

[9] See R. M. Hare, Freedom and Reason, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 67-85.

[10] See Plato, Republic IV. 439a-440d.

[11] This division of sources of sin is found in 1 John 2:16.

[12] D. J. O'Connor, Aquinas and Natural Law (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 55.

[13] Donald Davidson, "How is Weakness of the Will Possible?" in Moral Concepts, ed. Joel Feinberg (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 106.

[14] See Nicomachean Ethics III. 3. 1112a30-34.

[15] See Nicomachean Ethics III. 4. 1114a22-31.

[16] Ibid. VII. 8. 1150b29-1151a28.

[17] Frederick Copleston, Aquinas (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955), p. 184.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., pp. 184-185.

[21] Ibid., p. 185.

[22] The word that I have inserted here corresponds to potuit esse in the Latin text; why it is not included in the new English translation is unclear.

[23] See Aristotle, Metaphysics, IX. 8. 1049b23-25.

[24] John Milton, Paradise Lost, I. 157-165.

[25] Ibid., IV. 108-113

CHAPTER IV

THE ULTIMATE END: HAPPINESS AND THE PROBLEM OF EGOISM

Most of this dissertation so far has been devoted to the presentation of Thomas's notion of good as the object of appetite, inclination, and desire. This has led us to review Thomas's distinction of appetites into natural, sensitive, and rational and his notion of will as rational appetite. The notion of will as rational appetite, it was argued, covers over the fact that Thomas thinks of will both as the appetite of an intellectual being or faculty and as the power of decision for a rational animal with a plurality of appetites and inclinations. We have considered the will's orientation to good in general and Thomas's views on natural and necessary movement of the will to such objects as good in general and beatitude. We then examined at somewhat greater length the problems of the possibility of free choice and of the possibility of the choice of evil or of sin which arise as questions about the consequences of Thomas's doctrine of natural and necessary movements of the will and of his psychological thesis that choice is always of a good. We argued that, although he leaves free will ultimately unexplained within the categories of his system, Thomas is able to offer an account of deliberation and choice that is consistent with his notion of the will as a rational appetite and that does allow for the possibility of free choice. We argued also that, although Thomas admits the possibility of the deliberate choice of evil, he has no satisfactory account to give of such a choice that is consistent with the psychological thesis that choice is always of a good, but that his position does allow for the possibility of the choice of a lesser good over a greater good and of a non-moral good over a moral good.

We now turn to a consideration of the pursuit of the ultimate end in Thomas's account of human activity and its bearing on his moral theory. This consideration will fall into two main parts. In the first of these, we will focus on the subjective aspect of the pursuit of the ultimate end and specifically on the problem of whether Thomas's understanding of the human pursuit of happiness commits him to some form of psychological egoism, in which moral good would have only a subordinate and instrumental role. We have already seen that Thomas believes that there is a natural and necessary movement of the will to happiness. What we now want to know is what, if any bearing, do this movement of the will and the primacy that Thomas accords to it in our practical life and thought have on moral life and moral theory?

In the second of these two chapters on the last end, our attention will be given to the object in which happiness is to be found. Some of the questions to be considered will be: Does Thomas conceive of the human person's last end as a dominant or inclusive end? Does the specific last end that he proposes represent the object of his own personal desire, or can it be shown to be desired and intended by all human persons? Does Thomas's doctrine of the last end make his moral theory logically dependent on specific religious or metaphysical beliefs?

Complete Satisfaction of Desire as The Ultimate End of the Agent

At the beginning of the Prima Secundae, which is the part of the Summa Theologiae that deals with general questions of moral theory, Thomas places the questions concerning the ultimate purpose of human life and happiness or beatitude; for, as he says, "all our plans get their meanings from their final purpose" (S.T. I-II, Prologus). Thomas adopts from Aristotle a teleological account of human activity in general.[1] For Thomas, all human acts, that is, those acts which are proper to human agents and over which they exercise control by intellect will "must be for the sake of an end" (S.T. I-II, 1, 1c). It is the intellect in its practical function that directs or orders things to an end or good which is desired by the will. Thomas writes: "Now the object of will is being an end and good, and so it is clear that this is the determining principle[2] of human acts as such" (S.T. I-II, 1, 3c).

Starting from this teleological notion of human action, Thomas then sets out to show that there is one ultimate end that all human beings seek in all their actions. The first step that he takes in arguing for this controversial conclusion is to observe that in the double pattern of intention and execution that is characteristic of final causality there must always be something first. And that in the order of intention this must be a finis ultimus, which is "that which originally moves desire" (S.T. I-II, 1, 4c) and which is not desired for the sake of something further. Anthony Kenny comments: "It does seem to be a necessary truth that one cannot choose everything for the sake of something else: chains of reasoning about means and ends must come to a halt somewhere."[3] In S.T. I-II, 1, 4, Thomas does not think that he has shown that there is only one ultimate end, but rather that he has shown that there is no infinite series of final causes and so that any series of things ordered for the sake of something else must have an ultimate member. Any series of means must have an ultimate end. From this it does not follow that every series of means must have one and the same ultimate end. Thomas does not suggest that such a conclusion follows; indeed, he admits that where things are only accidentally connected there can be an infinity of ends and means.

It is only in the following article that Thomas maintains that there is for each human agent a unique final end. He offers three arguments for this view, of which the first is the clearest and most important. Thomas writes:

> First, because in all things whatsoever there is an appetite for completion, the final end to which each move marks its own perfect and fulfilling good. Augustine says, "In speaking of the culminating good, we mean, not that it passes away so as to be no more, but that is so brought to completion as to be fulfilled." The ultimate end ought so to fulfill a man's whole desire. Now this would not be the case were something else outside it still wanted. Hence it cannot be that desire should go out to two things as though each were its fulfillment (S.T. I-II, 1, 5c).

It is not clear just how close a connection Thomas intends between his claim in Article 4 that there must be an ultimate end or thing desired or thing desired for itself and not for the sake of another and his argument here that the ultimate end for an individual must be unique. But it is clear that in Article 5, he uses a much stronger notion of ultimate end than in Article 4. In Article 4 an end is ultimate if it is desired for itself; in Article 5, an end can only be ultimate if it is completely satisfying to an individual so that "nothing is left beside for him to desire." In understanding what Thomas has in mind in this stronger notion of the finis ultimus, we should realize that in Article 5 he speaks of "those who include various objects in their final end and take them as collectively comprising the ideal of one perfect good" (S.T. I-II, 1, 5 ad 1).

Thomas's stronger notion of an ultimate end does not presuppose either that there is one thing that completely satisfies all desires or that human agents believe that there is such a thing. Rather, it is the first step in his linking of the ultimate end with good in general or the object of the will. This stronger notion of ultimate end can be taken in one of two ways:

a) as a definite thing or condition or activity the attainment and realization of which is completely satisfactory,

b) as the complete satisfaction of one's desires.

The first alternative is ruled out as an interpretation of the notion of ultimate end in Question 1 both because it is only in Question 2 that Thomas considers the various objects that might be said to satisfy human desires and to constitute human happiness and because he allows that the last end can be taken in an inclusive sense so that the last end can include a number of heterogeneous goods. Thomas himself says somewhat later: "All desire their complete fulfillment, which, as we have noted, is what final end means (est ratio ultimi finis)" (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c). So it seems that Thomas is adopting in S.T. I-II, 1, 5, the view that beyond those things that count as ultimate ends because they are chosen for their own sake there is an ultimate end that is the condition of complete fulfillment or satisfaction of a person's desires. This, of course, confuses the notion of ultimate end; and it is not clear from the texts that Thomas himself realizes that he is working with two significantly different notions of ultimate end. It is well to remember, however, that the class of things chosen for their own sakes are chosen as instances of or participations in good in general, which is the object of the will as such; and so they need not be regarded as means and therefore as eo ipso not ultimate ends. But his use of two different notions of ultimate end creates the likelihood of equivocation in argument.

In the following article, Thomas maintains that everything that a human person wills is for the sake of the unique ultimate end. His primary line of argument is the following:

> First, whatever a man desires is because of its evidence of good (sub ratione boni). If not desired as the perfect good, that is, the ultimate end, then it is desired as tending to that, for a start is made in order to come to a finish, as appears in the products of nature and art alike. And so every initial perfection anticipates (ordinatur) the consummate perfection which comes with the final end (S.T. I-II, 1, 6c).

Any good that is aimed at in a human act falls under the notion of good in general and is somehow directed to perfect good as to the final end. Thomas here is assuming the truth of the psychological thesis that choice is always of good and is now going on to argue that all goods chosen are means to perfect and complete good. But such a conclusion does not follow, even if we adopt Thomas's views on the participation of particulars in universals, and even if we accept the truth of the psychological thesis. In the first place, the fact that a particular good is an instance of good in general does not show that it is a means that is causally conducive to an all-encompassing good. The relation of particular to universal and the relation of means to end cannot be regarded as the same relationship. In this connection it is instructive to recall the way in which John Stuart Mill recognizes the diversity of satisfactions that agents can aim at and the possibility of regarding them as parts of happiness rather than merely as means. He writes in the fourth chapter of Utilitarianism:

> The ingredients of happiness are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely when considered as swelling an aggregate. The principle of utility does not mean that any given pleasure, as music, for instance, or any given exemption from pain, as for example health, are to be looked upon as means to a collective something termed happiness, and to be desired on that account. They are desired and desirable in and for themselves; besides being means, they are part of the end.[4]

Mills wants to make the further claim that some things, for instance virtue, can pass from the category of means to the category of part or ingredient. Thomas does not draw this distinction between means and part clearly; but, as in the passage under review, he uses the language of development and fulfillment to indicate the relationship of the intermediate to the ultimate end. This would allow the intermediate object of choice to be more than a mere means, even though the movement of desire would pass beyond it towards something perfect. But, as his replies to the objections in the present question show, Thomas adopts an instrumentalist attitude toward both play and science (S.T. I-II, 1, 6, ad 1; ad 2). This problem will be considered again in our treatment of Thomas's views on the distinction between dominant and inclusive ends.

Secondly, as Thomas's doctrine of sin makes clear, it is possible for human agents to choose goods that are incompatible with their last end. As we saw in the previous chapter, sin for Thomas is not merely a conversion to a mutable good; it is also an aversion from the supreme and final good. It is not merely a matter of a human agent's choosing a good that is in fact not causally conducive to the last end (although because of the psychological thesis, it must somehow be included in the extension of the notion of good in general), but of the agent's knowing in some sense that the good chosen in the sinful act is incompatible with the last end. That which is chosen in the sinful act must, then, be good if it is to be chosen; but it must not be causally conducive to or even compatible with the last end if it is to be sinful. If the claim that an object of choice is an instance of good in general entailed that the object of choice was a means to the last end, then Thomas would have to maintain either that sinful objects of choice were means to the last end or that since all objects of choice are chosen as means to the last end, there cannot be a sinful object of choice. Neither alternative would be acceptable to Thomas as a Christian theologian or as an acute observer of human moral activity.

One possible line of defense for Thomas against this argument would be to maintain that the notion of sin as aversion from the last end is only applicable when it has been determined what that is in which the notion of the last end is actually realized. Thomas himself observes:

> We can speak of the ultimate end in two senses, namely to signify first what it means, and second that in which it is realized. As for the first all are at one here, because all desire their complete fulfillment which, as we have noted, is what final end means (quae est ratio ultimi finis). As for the second, however, all are not unanimous, for some want riches, others a life of pleasure, others something else (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c).

Using this distinction between the notion of last end and that in which the notion is realized, one could maintain that human agents will everything for the sake of the satisfaction of their desires which is the last end considered in its ratio or meaning, even though they do not will everything for the sake of seeing God, which is that in which the last end actually consists according to Thomas. Sin, then, occurs when a human agent turns away from God, the last end, and chooses a lesser good; even though the agent still chooses for the sake of satisfying his desires. Thus Thomas concludes: "When men sin they turn away from that in which the idea of the ultimate end is truly realized, not from the intention of reaching it, which mistakenly they seek elsewhere" (S.T. I-II, 1, 7 ad 1). What Thomas does not advert to is that this defense reduces sins of malice to sins of ignorance and fails to deal with situations in which the agent believes that the object chosen is incompatible with his last end.

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Anthony Kenny inquires whether the claim that there is a unique final end that a human agent pursues in all his choices is to be regarded as logically necessary or empirically true. He argues that the claim is neither; for, even though in voluntary action the agent acts as he desires to and aims at the satisfaction of his desire, this does not establish that he is aiming at the unique ultimate end of satisfying his desires. Kenny writes:

> If all that is being said is that when I act out of desire for x, then I am pursuing the satisfaction of my desire for x, it has not been established that I am pursuing a single end in all my actions; for there are as many different satisfactions as there are desires to satisfy.[5]

Kenny's argument here shows that the claim that satisfaction of the agent's wants is a unique last end and is not a logically necessary consequence of the thesis that the agent's voluntary activity always aims at the satisfaction of a desire of the agent. But, Kenny's claim that "there are as many different satisfactions as there are desires to satisfy" requires some modification if we are to understand what Thomas is proposing in his account of beatitude. For the possibility must be left open that one thing or condition may simultaneously satisfy a number of different desires. Working this out in detail would require an account of how desires and satisfactions are to be individuated. But it is reasonably clear that if we are to understand what Thomas has in mind when he says that God alone "can satisfy our will" (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c) and is therefore our happiness and our last end, we must think of the desires that God satisfies as desires for classes of goods, and not for individually named goods. It is desirable to avoid an approach to this issue which insists that my desire for X can only be satisfied by Y when X and Y are identical.

Kenny then argues that the claim that a human agent always aims at a good "which consists in the satisfaction of all his desires," is "not even empirically true."[6] Here his line of argument allows the possibility that there may be a unique end, but Kenny uses counter-examples to show that the end is not actually present in all one's choices. He writes:

> For it is perfectly possible not to have as a goal the satisfaction of all one's desires and indeed positively to hope that not all one's desires will be satisfied. Russell, for instance, in The Conquest of Happiness, says 'to be without some of the things you want is an indispensable part of happiness.' In so far as Russell wants to be happy, he must, in conformity with his dictum, want to be without some of the things he wants . . . . Similarly, patience seems to demand that we should have inconsistent desires: at least that we should be willing that some of our desires should be dissatisfied. But whether or not such inconsistency in desires is desirable, it is certainly possible. If so, it cannot be a logical truth that in everything we do we seek a single aim of total satisfaction.[7]

We can grant that Kenny's contention that it is logically possible for a human agent to aim at goals and to make choices that require the non-satisfaction of some of his desires. In addition we can point out that at least in the level of desires for individual objects at specified times it is possible for persons to have desires for incompatible and even contradictory things, e.g., a person may desire to eat at a certain time because he is hungry and may desire not to eat at that time because he is busy or angry or worried. This again suggests the importance of understanding desire and the satisfaction of desire in a sufficiently general way that the hypothesis of total satisfaction of one's desires does not become trivially false.

Kenny's treatment of this problem, however, misses two important considerations that can illuminate Thomas's position. First, when Thomas speaks of happiness as the ultimate end of man, he is not thinking of something that is attainable in the circumstances of this present life. Thomas writes: "The general notion of happiness, of goodness perfect and sufficient, implies that every ill is banished, and every desire fulfilled. Neither is possible in this life" (S.T. I-II, 5, 3c). In the present order of things, we must make do with activities and results that fall far short of total satisfaction; and it is part of the task of the reasonable and virtuous human person to develop right and appropriate responses to this situation. Hence, the necessity of patience and of the moral virtues generally. But when the final end is attained, there is according to Thomas no need for such virtues except in their formal element, which is the order of reason (S.T. I-II, 67, 1c). Thomas specifically quotes Augustine on the absence of patience in the situation of perfect beatitude when the human mind sees God directly.

> The act of patience in heaven will not be endurance of hardships, but the enjoyment of the blessings which we sought to reach by patience. So Augustine says that "in heaven, patience itself will not exist, for it is needed only when hardships are to be borne. But what we attain by patience will endure forever" [8] (S.T. II-II, 136, 1 ad 1).

So virtues that presuppose the existence of evils and conflicting desires have a fundamentally provisional character for Thomas. The virtue that provides a moral continuity between the imperfections of this life and the perfection of beatitude is the virtue of charity, which has for its primary object God himself (S.T. I-II, 67, 6c).

Second, Kenny's easy acceptance of a situation in which a human agent adopts the attitude of wanting "to be without some of the things he wants" or in which he is "willing that some of our desires should be dissatisfied" brushes over the paradoxical character of such situations. For the human agent to adopt such attitudes is only rational when he is doing so for the sake of some good that he values more than the goods he is willing to be without or than the desires he is willing to leave unsatisfied. Thus one might, as William James proposed, renounce the satisfactions of the genial mood and accept "the ethics of infinite and mysterious obligation" with a view to "getting out of the game of existence its keenest possibility of zest."[9] The point is that such attitudes of renunciation require explanation and justification. Given the ordinary circumstances of life, in which the total satisfaction of all desires is an implausible goal, the weighting of desires according to the feasibility and importance and worth of satisfying them is rational and necessary and is indeed a central feature of most systems of morality and of prudence. So the justification of attitudes of partial renunciation is not particularly difficult; but it is needed if such attitudes are not to be regarded as evidence of failure to understand the notion of desire on the one hand or as signs of masochistic tendencies or willful perversity or insensitivity on the other. We should add that justifying the partial renunciation of desires can apply not only to acts of choice but also to long term policies and attitudes, e.g., acquiring and exercising the virtue of patience. The agent who adopts such policies and attitudes is in effect committing himself to a plan of life which does not aim at the total satisfaction of all his desires. In fact, Thomas himself as a Dominican friar, adopted such a plan of life, in which he committed himself to the renunciations implied by the religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. In his treatment of the religious life in S.T. II-II, 186, Thomas is particularly anxious to stress the incompatibility between satisfying certain kinds of desires and achieving the perfection of charity. "Regarding future happiness, one is directed to it by charity. . . . But the possession of riches by its very nature impedes the perfection of charity, especially by alluring and distracting the soul." (S.T. II-II, 186, 3 *ad* 4).

The point here is that Thomas as a Christian theologican insists on the importance and value of policies of renunciation in a way that is surprising, given what he says about the complete fulfillment of human desire as the ultimate end of the human agent. It seems that when he considers the particular moral virtues and the institution of religious life, far from affirming that it is logically necessary that the human agent aim at the satisfaction of all his desires, he does not even think such a goal desirable.

One way to defend Thomas's position would be to hold that such renunciations are merely instrumental to the attainment of the last end. In fact, Thomas himself proposes such a view in his consideration of the religious life in S.T. II-II, 186, 1c and 3c. The situation, simply put, is that Thomas commends a life of renunciation in a religious order as a means to perfection, while at the same time proposing a goal of total satisfaction of desire beyond this life. Taken together, these recommendations do not constitute a self-contradictory program, though they do form a paradox. Thomas's situation is parallel to the utilitarian difficulty in incorporating "the morality of self-devotion." John Stuart Mill contends:

> A sacrifice which does not increase, or tend to increase, the sum total of happiness, it [utilitarianism] considers as wasted. The only self-reunciation which it applauds is devotion to the happiness, or to some of the means of happiness, of others; either of mankind collectively, or of individuals within the limits imposed by the collective interests of mankind.[10]

Mill resolves the tension between sacrifice and the pursuit of happiness by making sacrifice instrumental to the welfare of others; Thomas does it by making sacrifice instrumental to one's own long-range good and by making sacrifice temporary and satisfaction permanent.

But since in Thomas's approach the goal to which renunciation is instrumental is not within our experience in this world, the relation between earthly renunciation as means and heavely goal as end requires some further explanation. This is a problem that will recur in our examination of the connection between Thomas's account of beatitude and his notions of moral law and moral virtue. Here, however, it is important to see that Thomas is not proposing a teleological theory in which the total satisfaction of desire is the unique goal of the agent and every instance of satisfaction in this life then counts as either a means to the goal or a partial realization of it. It is simply not the case that Thomas endorses every instance of satisfaction of desire, since some instances of satisfaction of desire are wrong and sinful and since he recommends a plan of life which involves the systematic renunciation of desires for certain classes of goods. So what, in some ways, might readily appear as an affirmmation of a universal psychological egoism, in which all human persons aim at the goal of the total satisfaction of desire, and which would lead them to adopt a purely prudential plan of life, is also the basis for an austere ethic of renunciation.

God as the Ultimate End of the Agent

Resolution of this paradox requires that we consider not simply Thomas's notion of the last end, but also his view on "that in which it is realized" (S.T. I-II, 1, 7). This, as we know, is God. But God for Thomas is not simply Yahweh, the God of Biblical revelation, who is a personal being guiding Israel and calling his people to union with himself. He is also a being of all-encompassing perfection who "necessarily contains within himself the full perfection of being" (S.T. I, 4, 2c) and who alone "possesses every kind of perfection by nature" (S.T. I, 6, 3c), and who "causes in all other things their being, their goodness, and whatever other perfection they have" (S.T. I, 2, 3c). God is not simply a being among other beings which individual agents might desire or not, depending on their own preferences. Rather, he is the first cause of the existence and goodness of other beings, the source in which they participate. Thus, Thomas maintains, "all things are said to be good by divine goodness, which is the pattern, source, and goal of all goodness" (S.T. I, 6, 4c). It is not to our purpose to assess Thomas's general account of the connection between God's attributes and those of creatures; but it is very important to see that Thomas can regard God as the unique last end of every human person only because he regards God as the source of goodness and universal good. His argument in S.T. I-II, 2, 8c makes this plain:

> The object of the will, that is the human appetite, is the Good without reserve, (universale bonum), just as the object of the mind is the True without reserve. Clearly, then, nothing can satisfy man's will except such goodness, which is found, not in anything created, but in God alone. Everything created is a derivative good (habet bonitatem participatam). He alone . . . can satisfy our will (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c).

This conception of God as universal good is of pivotal importance to Thomas; for it enables him to maintain that a policy of renunciation of desires can lead to the attainment of an end that is the total satisfaction of desires, to maintain that all human persons share a unique end no matter what their actual desires are, and to propose a last end that is both inclusive and dominant. Our interest in this notion of God as universal good is not in the problems that it involves with regard to the distinction between particulars and universals[11] or with regard to God's relation to the world and its possible pantheistic implications, but rather with regard to its consequences for Thomas's ethical theory and his account of human action.

We have already seen that according to Thomas, the human will has a necessary movement to good in general as its proper object and last end, but that it does not have such a necessary movement to God, who is the universal good. This position is an application of Thomas's distinction between the notion of the last end as complete fulfillment of desire and that end in which such fulfillment is found (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c). This distinction enables Thomas to run his arguments about the last end of man on two different levels. On the one hand, the human agent has a necessary direction to good in general, since this is the proper object of the will and since, according to the psychological thesis, nothing can be chosen that falls outside it. This orientation of the will does not involve any necessary movement of the will to specific goods and is intended to be compatible with any choices that the agent may make. Also, it does not entail the existence of any one thing that would be universal good or would be the source in which all lesser goods participate.

On the other hand, the human agent is supposed to direct his actions voluntarily to God as so many means to his complete good and last end. Not every action and object that is chosen can serve as a means to this last end; and so sin is possible (S.T. I-

II, 1, 7 ad 1), even though what is chosen still must count as a good. It is clear that not all men consciously seek God as their last end, and it is obvious that it would be irrational for them to do so if they did not believe that He existed. It would indeed be logically impossible for atheists to take God as the last end of their activity.[12] Directing one's action to God as last end then entails that the agent believe in the existence of God. But it does not entail that the agent accept Thomas's account of God as the original good in which all others participate. For it is possible for a non-Thomistic religious believer to direct his actions to God as a determinate last end without regarding Him as an all-inclusive good. All that seems required for such a policy to be rational is that the religious believer regard God as supremely good or good in the highest possible degree.

When these two levels of argument are distinguished and when it is seen that Thomas is using both a necessary movement of the will to good in general and a free movement of the will to God as universal good in his account of last end of the human agent, it is possible for us to explain a number of puzzling features of his position.

We can see the importance of making this distinction when we compare Aquinas's position on the last end of man with that of Thomas Hobbes. Thus Hobbes, who rejects the notion of a last end, at the same time accepts the view that the human agent aims at the complete satisfaction of his desires. He writes in Leviathan:

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> The Felicity of this life consisteth not in the repose of a mind satisfied. For there is no such Finis ultimus (utmost ayme) nor Summum Bonum (greatest Good), as is spoken of in the Books of the old Moral Philosophers. Nor can a man any more live, whose Desires are at an end, than he, whose Senses and Imagination are at a stand. Felicity is a continuall progresse from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the latter. The cause whereof is, That the object of mans desire is not to enjoy once onely, and for one instant of time: but to assure forever, the way of his future desire. And therefore the voluntary actions, and inclinations of all men, tend not only to the procuring, but also to the assuring of a contented life; and differ only in the way: which ariseth partly from the diversity of passions, in divers men and partly from the difference of the knowledge, or opinion each one has of the causes, which produce the effect desired.[13]

We note that Hobbes and Aquinas both hold that all human persons, while differing in their passions and beliefs, desire the satisfaction of their desires and a life of sure contentment. The crucial difference between them is about whether or not there is an object which, when possessed, can bring about the satisfaction of all human desires. Both would agree that if there is such an object, it is reasonable for a human agent to organize his life with a view to attaining the object and to treat his activities as means to the end of possessing or enjoying that object. Since Hobbes holds that there is no such object, he interprets the human desire for complete satisfaction of one's desire as the basis for continual striving and acquisitiveness: "a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death."[14]

In Hobbes, the desire for the complete satisfaction of one's desires produces a progressive and insatiable egoism and is the source of conflict between persons. In Aquinas, by contrast, the desire for complete satisfaction of one's desires is an orientation to an uncreated perfect good, God, who alone "can satisfy our will" and in whom alone "our happiness lies" (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c). Aquinas holds that this orientation to perfect good ensures rightness of will in the agent, since "the will is rightful when duly bent on its ultimate end" (S.T. I-II, 4, 4c). It also produces a charitable and harmonious relationship with other persons, for "our loving choice of them results from our full loving of God" (S.T. I-II, 4, 8c).

When we look at Aquinas and Hobbes in this comparative fashion, we see that the difference between them about whether or not there is a finis ultimus is not a simple difference in factual belief about whether or not there is in the universe a being that completely satisfies human desires but that this difference has profound consequences for the character of the resulting ethical theories. For Hobbes, like Aquinas, regards good as "the object of any man's appetite or desire."[15] Each person's interest in the satisfaction of his desires, in the absence of a single good that is capable of satisfying all desires leads to an inherently limitless pursuit of objects that the agent thinks will satisfy his desires. The effective measure of the goodness of things is their capacity to satisfy the agent's desires. In Aquinas, on the other hand, although he shares Hobbes's understanding of good as the object of appetite or desire, affirmation of the existence of a particular object capable of satisfying all desires produces a transformation of the egoism of Hobbes. For attainment of this object becomes

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the effective norm for action. Thus not every satisfaction of a specific desire is ultimately good or forms part of a good or rational plan of life for the agent. It will, of course, be good from some standpoint or in some regard; otherwise, according to the psychological thesis, it would not be chosen; but, if it is not compatible with or lacks proper order to the ultimate end, it is also evil and lacks the goodness appropriate to it as a voluntary act. Aquinas writes:

> An act of will's goodness depends on the end intended. Now the human will's ultimate end is the supreme good, and this is God, as we have shown. For an act of human will to be good, then, it must be ordered to the supreme good" (S.T. I-II, 19, 9c).

We have already seen that for Aquinas sin is not a turning away from all desire of pursuing or reaching the last end but is a turning away from that in which the last end is actually realized. The possibility of evil in voluntary actions or of sin requires then that the ultimate good be particular and not simply good in general; for, given Aquinas's psychological thesis, no object that could be chosen would fall outside the scope of good in general.

The last end must also be a particular and determinate good, if it is to serve in some way as a norm and first principle for the particular choices of human beings. Aquinas maintains that the last end provides the fundamental principle of moral and practical activity. He affirms: "Now the principle of the whole moral order is the ultimate goal, which relates to the realm of activity in the same way that self-evident principles are related in the realm of speculation" (S.T. I-II, 72, 5c). One might be tempted to think that "the principle of the whole moral order" is equivalent to the first precept of the natural law "that good is to be sought and done, evil to be avoided" (S.T. I-II, 94, 4c), which Aquinas also compares to the Aristotelian principle of non-contradiction in its fundamental function and which he explicates in such a way that it clearly refers to good in general. But such a formal and general reading of the fundamental principle, when combined with the psychological thesis, will authorize the choice of anything that can actually be chosen and will not provide normative guidance that will enable us to discriminate between courses of action that lead to or are compatible with a particular last end and those that lead away from it or are incompatible with it. God as the particular last end, to which (presumably) every action does not lead and to which there is not, in Aquinas's view, a natural and necessary movement of the will (as there is to good in general), can serve a normative function with regard to particular human actions and objects of desire. God as a particular last end can give a distinctive shape and direction to a human agent's plan of life, which an orientation to good in general cannot do precisely because of its all-inclusive character.

The agent's intention of God as last end and subsequent evaluation of particular actions and of desires in relationship to the last end effectively differentiates Aquinas's moral world from

Hobbes's and makes it theocentric rather than anthropocentric. While agents in both these moral worlds desire the complete and lasting satisfaction of all their desires, agents in Aquinas's world are committed to evaluating and choosing particular objects and actions on the basis of their relationship to the last end, which is itself a particular being union with which brings complete and lasting satisfaction of their desires. If particular objects of desire are incompatible with this last end, then, though they fall within the extension of good in general, they cannot serve as means to the last end; and choice of them is sinful. On the other side, the renunciation of specific objects of desire is intelligible and rational if it leads to union with God as the particular last end; whereas, if one's last end is simply the satisfaction of all one's desires, then renunciation is incompatible with a last end conceived in such general terms. God as particular last end serves as a reference point outside the system of the agent's desires and their objects, even though he is at the same time the object that completely satisfies all desires. He can serve as an independent teleological norm for desires, actions, objects, and plans of life, some of which may lead to him and some of which may not. If this independent reference point is removed by the denial of the existence of God or by putting him beyond the realm of human striving and attainment, then it is easy to see how agents with the general psychology described by Aquinas could be taken for egoists and could adopt a plan of life aimed at maximizing the satisfaction of desires. It would, however, be a mistake to regard such non-theistic Thomistic agents as Hobbesian egoists, since they have natural inclinations to act according to virtue and to live together harmoniously in society (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c; I-II, 94, 3c). We shall have occasion to return to the question of whether Aquinas's conception of God as the last end of human activity involves the human agent in an egoistic and interested attitude toward God. But it should be clear from our present discussion that the notion of God as last end introduces an independent constraint on the agent's pursuit of his own desires so that the damaging social consequences normally thought to result from egoistic attitudes can be avoided and that it provides an independent basis for evaluations such that courses of action contrary to the agent's conception of his own interest can be commended and even regarded as obligatory.

Furthermore, the object that is to be aimed at because attainment of it satisfies all of the agent's desires is not itself an economic good or a good that can be possessed by some to the exclusion of others. For, according to Aquinas, external goods are in no way "needed for the perfect happiness of seeing God" (S.T. I-II, 4, 7c). Human happiness does not consist in riches, honors, fame, power, or pleasure, or indeed in anything created (S.T. I-II, 2). So the human striving for happiness does not produce in Aquinas's world the "perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power that ceaseth onely in Death" and the "contention of Riches, Honour, Command, or other power" which "enclineth to Contention, Enmity, and War" that Hobbes saw as disruptive consequences of the human search for happiness.[16] God as the object of the human striving for happiness and as the particular last end of human activity is unlimited good containing all perfections (S.T. I, 4, 2) and exceeding the finite capacity of any of his creatures (S.T. I, 12, 7). The person who attains the vision of God has no desire to abandon it for some lesser good and possesses it in eternal security (S.T. I-II, 5, 4). Aquinas writes of the situation of those who attain God as their last end in the following terms:

> But the blessed have this triple gift in God, for they see him and seeing him they possess him, holding him for ever in their sight, and holding him they enjoy him as their ultimate goal fulfilling all their desires (S.T. I, 12, 7c).

Clearly there is no need and no place for either conflict or anxiety in such a situation; and so the striving to achieve such a situation has to be recognized as different from the effort to satisfy all one's desires under the conditions of this life, an effort that usually involves a person in conflicts of claims with others in ways that require moral and legal regulation. In short, the blessed or those who have attained beatitude are no longer in the objective circumstances of justice, which Hume briefly characterized as the "easy change" of external objects, "joined to their scarcity in comparison of the wants and desires of men."[17] The blessed are in some sense beyond not merely justice but even the life of moral virtue itself. Aquinas writes:

> So then it must be admitted that these moral virtues as

> regards their material element do not remain in the future life. For then desires and pleasures in matters of food and sex will have no place, nor will fear and daring about dangers of death, nor distributions and exchanges of things employed in this present life (S.T. I-II, 67, 1c).[18]

The situation involved in attainment of the final end does not then require the exercise of acts of the moral virtues. The "material element," by which Aquinas means "a certain bent of the appetitive part to a certain manner of feelings and deeds" therefore lapses; all that remains is the formal element, the "order of reason" (S.T. I-II, 67, 1c). The moral institution of life is appropriate and required in the conditions of this present life; but it is preparatory for and instrumental to the enjoyment of beatitude.

In this respect, Aquinas's teleological account of human action treats morality as a means to attaining an ultimate good that since it includes all perfections, includes both moral and non-moral good in itself. This instrumental aspect of Aquinas's ethical theory, despite certain affinities with utilitarianism does not, as we shall see, commit him to a utilitarian account of the derivation of moral rules or of the rightness and wrongness of particular acts. On the issue of egoism, it may seem question-begging to suggest a similarity between Aquinas's ethical theory and utilitarianism; the point of comparison here is that, even if one takes Aquinas to be a long-range supernatural egoist who holds that actions are right because they are conducive to the agent's eternal happiness, the structure of his theory is such that it allows for and even requires restrictions on the individual's pursuit of his interest in this life in much the same way that utilitarianism requires such restrictions for the sake of promoting the good of all. A supernatural egoism based on traditional Christian beliefs about the after-life and divine rewards and punishments still leaves a space between the egoistic motives and desires of the individual and the attainment of the object that satisfies them, a space which allows for the development of a morality and an asceticism even by egoistic agents. This leaves the question of whether Thomas holds a form of psychological egoism still unsettled; for, as we shall see in the following section of this chapter, there are moves available to Thomas and his defenders that would open the way to a non-egoistic interpretation of his views. It also leaves open the possibility that, when the framework of supernatural orientation and fulfillment that gives content to the natural and necessary movement of the agent's will to the ultimate end of complete satisfaction is removed, the morality developed in "the space between" may be independent of psychological egoism and may actually be shaped by other considerations that may be of interest even to those who would find the supernatural framework implausible or unacceptable.

Non-Egoistic Elements in Thomas's Theory: Love of Universal Good and Natural Love of God

We should begin by noting that the psychological thesis that choice is always of good does not, in Thomas's various formulations and uses of it, commit him to the view that the class of goods among which the agent is free to choose is restricted to those objects which are non-moral goods for the agent himself. As we pointed out earlier, Thomas does not make extended or systematic use of the notion of "good for X" in contrast to the notion of "good." His failure to employ this distinction should make us hesitant about interpreting passages about the agent's pursuit of good along unambiguously egoistic or non-egoistic lines. So if we think of psychological egoism as the view "that each of us is always seeking his own greatest good, whether this is conceived of as pleasure, happiness, knowledge, power, self-realization, or a mixed life,"[19] the problem of whether Thomas is committed to psychological egoism does not arise so much from the psychological thesis as from his doctrine of the natural and necessary movement of the agent's will to the last end or happiness.

An example of the difficulties that confront simple egoistic interpretations of Thomas can be found in the celebrated theological study of the Christian idea of love, Agape and Eros, by Anders Nygren. Nygren presents Thomas's position thus: "His basic idea can be summarised in two sentences: (1) everything in Christianity can be traced back to love, and (2) everything in love can be traced back to self-love."[20] In support of this view, Nygren refers to a passage in which Thomas holds that "the reason why we love God at all is that we need Him as our bonum."[21] The passage in question, then, seems to show the interested character of the agent's love for God as his last end. However, what the passage referred to actually says is: "For what makes any nature love God is that it derives from God all the goodness it has" (S.T. I, 60, 5 ad 2). What this shows is not that Thomas attributes egoistic motives to the human agent who loves God, but rather that the agent's love of God is based on a relation of dependence to God. For Thomas even speaks of the individual agent's love of self as arising out of this relationship of dependence: "So among other things which, as belonging to God he loves out of charity, man also loves himself" (S.T. II-II, 25, 4c).

In the earlier Summa Contra Gentiles, Thomas held with regard to things in general, including beings with knowledge, that each of them "tends to its own good, because it tends to the divine likeness, and not conversely" (S.C.G. III, 19).[22] This tendency to the divine likeness is a tendency to the goodness of the being in question, for "a thing is made like unto God in so far as it is good." The ground for this priority of the tendency to god-likeness over the tendency to the creature's own good lies in Thomas's view that God, as well as being the source and creator of all the good that creatures do or can possess, is to be identified with good in general (bonum universale) (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c). The individual creature's pursuit of his own good properly understood does not take him out of or away from the universal good, which is God. So Thomas writes:

> Since then the good, taken quite universally, is God himself and since all angels, all men and all other creatures exist as contained within that good -- because every creature, precisely in respect of what it is by nature, belongs to God -- it follows that the instinctive natural love of each angel and each man is for God first of all and for God more than

> for self. Otherwise, if this were not true, if creatures by nature loved themselves more than God, then natural loving would be perverse; and would not be perfected, but destroyed by charity (S.T. I, 60, 5c).

What Thomas has in mind here is that creature's response to infinite good is not to use it as a means to the satisfaction of its own desires, which would be an egoistic response, but to be drawn to it as it is in itself. For he goes on to say that "no angel naturally loves God for the sake of the end which is his own good, but for the sake of God himself" (S.T. 60, 5 *ad* 1). So Thomas argues against the view that angel's "natural self-love is more basic and more intense than his natural love for God" (S.T. I, 60, 5c); and he holds that men love God more than themselves both by the natural love which they exhibit in common with all other creatures toward universal good and by the friendship of charity, which is based on God's gifts of grace (S.T. II-II, 26, 3c).

There are two main difficulties with this way of resolving the problem of egoism by appealing to creatures' love for the universal good. First, there are difficulties that arise from the identification of God with universal good; these difficulties are fundamentally ontological and theological and will not be considered in this dissertation. Second, Thomas's use of the notion of universal good has some unexpected consequences. We recall that for Thomas the will has a natural and necessary movement to good in general or universal good, though not to God himself. Now once one grants Thomas the psychological thesis that choice is always of good, then every choice will be of something which is included in universal good; and every choice will exemplify the will's movement to universal good. But this will be true of interested and selfish choices as well as of disinterested and unselfish ones. The will's movement to universal good would be present in a person who led what we would judge to be a completely selfish life and whose actions were motivated purely by concern for his own non-moral good. So appealing to the will's movement to universal good does not establish that people do act altruistically. In fact, as Thomas grants, this movement of the will is even compatible with hatred of God, who is himself universal good. Thomas holds that those who see God's essence "are impelled by identically the same love both to love him as he is other than creatures and to love him as creation's general good" (S.T. I, 60, 5 ad 5). But, he goes on to say, those of God's creatures who do not see him in this way which enables them to know the identity of God as a particular and distinct being (prout est ab aliis distincta) with the universal or common good and who know him only through his effects, can hate him, because these effects can be contrary to their will. So he concludes: "This is how creatures can sometimes be said to hate God; though it remains true that, as the common good, the term of all appetition, God is naturally loved by each thing more than itself" (S.T. I, 60, 5 ad 5). That Thomas should grant the possibility that intellectual creatures can hate God is consistent with his denial that there is a natural and necessary movement of the will to God, even though, as we argued earlier, his account of sins of malice (of which hatred of God would surely be one) is unsatisfactory.

It might seem that talk of a natural and necessary movement of the will to universal good, when this is interpreted so comprehensively as to allow selfish activity and hatred of God, is so vague and empty as to be virtually worthless. But what Thomas wants to establish by this notion is not that people actually do act unselfishly or for some good higher than their own individual good, but rather that the good to which the will has a natural and necessary movement is broader in extent than the good of the individual creature so that, as a consequence, non-egoistic action is at least possible. What Thomas is doing is to set up good in general as a more comprehensive category that includes both the agent's own good and the good of other persons and groups. So the examples which he offers in the article under consideration (S.T. I, 60, 5) are not examples of altruistic action undertaken for the good of another but instead of action undertaken for a more comprehensive good. He writes:

> Thus we see the parts of a whole going into action for the sake of the whole, whatever the result to themselves; a hand instinctively moves to ward off a blow that would harm the body as a whole. And since reason follows the model of nature, we find a like tendency, for example, in good citizens; they are disposed to face death for the well-being of their city; and if man were made by nature part of a city, this disposition would be purely instinctive (haec inclinatio . . . naturalis) (S.T. I, 60, 5c).

Thomas's concluding comment on the case of the good citizen reminds us that he assimilates this devotion to the common good not to the summits of heroic or saintly virtue but to a tendency present even in non-rational creatures. This assimilation is an instance of the ambiguity we noticed in his notion of natural inclination, which can be natural because it arises from the rationality of a rational nature or because it is present in all natures as such. Both of Thomas's examples are cases in which the part prefers the good of the whole to its own good. Thus Thomas holds that "each individual of a species tends naturally to the good of the species more than to its own private good" (*S.T.* I, 60, 5 *ad* 1).

He argues in more general terms that where there is an ontological dependence of one thing on another, where "one is the entire reason why there *is* any being or goodness in the other (*tota ratio existendi et bonitatis alii*)" (*S.T.* I, 60, 5 *ad* 1), then the dependent thing has greater natural love for that on which it depends than for itself. Now this claim is obviously intended to apply primarily to the relation between God, who alone is for Thomas good by nature and the source of goodness in all things and creatures (*S.T.* I, 6, 3 *ad* 4). The love of the part for the good of the whole to which it belongs, and the love of the dependent being for the good of the source from which it comes can both be regarded as instances of ontological dependence, if we construe that notion broadly. Thomas's view that God is both the Creator of individual creatures and the universal good to which they tend and of which particular goods are somehow part makes it easy for him to run these two models (part-whole and effect-cause) together. But what we find with both models is that the agent's tendency to good is not restricted to his own good, nor is it expanded to the good of what is fundamentally other than himself. It is directed to

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the good of that to which he stands in a relation of dependence or inclusion. This yields an understanding of the natural love of the creature (man or angel) for God, which goes beyond self-love and desiring God simply as a means to one's own satisfaction, but which falls short of charity: for it is an aspect of a natural and necessary movement of the will, rather than a voluntary expression of self-surrender. The limits of this notion of natural love in overcoming egoism are apparent when we consider what Thomas says about two beings that do not stand in a relationship of dependence or inclusion to each other. "Among such things certainly natural love goes to the self more than to others, each thing being more one with itself than with anything else" (S.T. I, 60, 5 ad 1). When we consider a text such as this, it seems a more accurate characterization of Thomas's view of human motivation to regard it as non-egoistic rather than positively altruistic.

When Thomas speaks of the natural love of God, he remarks: "Now God is not just the good of this or that species: he is the universal good, simply and absolutely. Hence each and every being, each in the way appropriate to it, by nature loves God more than itself" (S.T. I, 60, 1 ad 1). But this seems to be in contradiction to what Thomas says elsewhere about the possibility of hating God, a possibility that we indicated earlier was somehow compatible in his view with the natural and necessary movement of the will to universal good. In resolving this contradiction, we would point out that Thomas ascribes the natural love of God to all beings. In the case of non-rational beings, the tendency to universal good and the tendency to God come to the same thing; for none of them is capable of either comprehending or failing to comprehend that God is universal good, and so none of them can choose a good in opposition to God or can aim at universal good while rejecting or hating God. In the case of a rational or intellectual creature, the agent can (and, according to the psychological thesis, must) choose a good that is included within universal good but can still reject God because of failing to see that God is universal good (S.T. I, 60, 5 ad 5). So this requires that the creature's "natural love" (dilectio naturalis), in contrast to its love of choice (dilectio electiva), be independent of and logically prior to specific acts of knowing and loving. Also, this "natural love" of God is irrelevant to moral assessments of the person's character, habits, motives and choices, since it is necessarily present in beings that may be morally good or morally evil. In the case of rational and intellectual creatures, the tendency to universal good and the natural love of God come to much the same thing: both are compatible in Thomas's view with the choice of evil and even with the rejection of God. Natural law conceived in this way serves, like the will's natural tendency to universal good, to provide a non-free basis for particular free acts of willing.

Thomas declares in a passage that he intends to apply both to men and to angels:

> Hence by nature [the will] tends to a final end; every man naturally wants happiness. And that natural willing is the cause of every other; we will nothing except for the end's sake. Hence the distinction between natural love and the

> love that involves choice: the former is of the good which man desires as his end; the latter, deriving from it, is of goods man may desire in view of that end (S.T. I, 60, 2c).

This text indicates the foundational role of "natural love" for Thomas, but it brings back the problem of egoism. To put the issue bluntly, Thomas writes here as if the agent aims always at his own happiness and chooses particular goods (among them, God) as means to his own happiness. There are two sources of this problem, one which is manifest in the text just cited and one which has to do with Thomas's Aristotelian conception of choice. Now we have already seen that Thomas would reject the view that an intellectual or rational creature would have greater natural love for himself than for God or universal good. But in giving an example of natural love in this passage, Thomas speaks of the will's natural willing of its own ultimate end (suum finem ultimum), of which man's desire for happiness is an instance. Now, as we have also seen, this natural willing of happiness does not exclude the choice of evil and the rejection of God; it is also, of course, compatible with the choice of good and the free choice of God. But Thomas accepts Aristotle's dictum that choice is of means and not of ends, and he affirms that "an end is not, as such, a matter of choice" and that "the last end, however, is in no way a matter of choice" (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c). So it seems that God, who can either be chosen or rejected by the individual agent, must be regarded as a means to happiness and not as the last end. In confirmation of this, we may note that Thomas says that "happiness is the ultimate

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end of all the virtues, and their proper ends are subordinate to that, which is why they fall into our field of choice" (S.T. I-II, 13, 3 ad 1). So if God can be chosen or rejected, then it seems that he must be a means rather than the ultimate end and that Thomas really conceives of the last end in egoistic terms as the satisfaction of the individual's own desires.

Non-Egoistic Elements in Thomas's Theory: Objective Beatitude

This objection, however, ignores a central distinction that Thomas makes in his account of beatitude, namely the distinction between objective and subjective beatitude; but it should be said that Thomas himself frequently blurs this distinction. The point of the distinction is suggested by the contrasting titles of Questions 2 and 3 of Summa Theologiae, I-II, which are respectively, "De his in quibus beatitudo consistit," or "About the things in which beatitude consists," and "Quid sit beatitudo" or "What beatitude is." In Question 2, Thomas, following in the footsteps of Aristotle, considers the various things the possession of which is thought to bring happiness. Among the candidates considered are riches, honors, fame and glory, power, a good condition of the body, pleasure, or a good condition of the soul. That in which beatitude consists or is found, according to Thomas, is the universal and uncreated good, namely, God (S.T. I-II, 2, 8), who can thus be regarded as human beings' objective beatitude. The question about subjective beatitude, Question 3, deals with the activity of the subject or agent with regard to this object. Here

Thomas, again following Aristotle, holds that "in so far as man's happiness is a creaturely reality in him the inference must be that it is an activity" (S.T. I-II, 3, 2c). Happiness in the subject "is the laying hold of our ultimate end" (consecutio ultimi finis) (S.T. I-II, 3, 4c); and, in the case of rational and intellectual creatures, this is done by "the activity of contemplating the things of God" (S.T. I-II, 3, 5c) and ultimately "by union with God as its object" (S.T. I-II, 3, 8c). Subjective beatitude is necessarily internal to the subject or the agent but is dependent on an external object. Thomas makes this point explicit when he says: "The thing itself desired as the final end is that which gives substance to happiness (id in quo beatitudo consistit) and makes a man happy (beatum), though happiness itself (beatitudo) is a real condition of soul yet is founded on a thing outside the soul" (S.T. I-II, 2, 7 ad 3). This text reminds us that the distinction between subjective and objective beatitude is a distinction between two aspects of the last end of man and of intellectual creatures generally. The basic distinction involved here is one that is common to all ends, whether these be ultimate or not. Thus Thomas writes: "There are two sides to an end. One, the thing itself we long for, thus money for the miser. Two, the getting, holding, or effective attainment and enjoyment of it, as hoarding for the miser, or self-indulging for a voluptuary" (S.T. I-II, 3, 1c). Now, in making this distinction, Thomas believes himself to be repeating a distinction that Aristotle makes with regard to ends. In the De Anima Aristotle says: "We must here recall the two sense of 'that for the sake of which,' viz. a) the end to achieve which, and (b) the being in whose interest, the act is done"[23] But Aristotle's distinction is between the end to be attained, what the later scholastic philosophers and theologians spoke of as the _finis qui_, and the subject that attains the end is benefitted by doing so (_the finis cui_); whereas Thomas' distinction is between the end to be attained (_finis qui_) and the attainment of the end by the subject (_finis quo_). The attainment of the end by the subject (_finis quo_) is logically dependent on the existence of both the end and the subject and their presence to each other. The subjective aspect of the last end when this is conceived along the lines of Thomas's distinction rather than Aristotle's may alleviate the problem of egoism to some extent because, while the attainment of the last end is clearly a good for the subject attaining it, subjective beatitude involves a dependence of the subject on the end attained and is not simply an internal condition of the subject which might exist independently of the end to be attained. If we use Aristotle's distinction, it is possible to say that in his sense "we ourselves are the end." In Thomas's conception of beatitude, however, the intellectual subject always remains dependent on the unlimited good which is the object of its desire. Even subjective beatitude is focused on a good outside itself; it is, so to speak, extroverted.

The distinction between objective and subjective beatitude enables Thomas to hold that objective beatitude is an uncreated good (_S.T._ I-II, 2, 8c) and is one and the same for all creatures. (_S.T._ I-II, 1, 8c), whereas subjective beatitude or the attainment of the last end is a created reality within the creature (S.T. I-II, 3, 1c) and differs from creature to creature (S.T. I-II, 1, 8c; I-II, 3, 8c). It would be a fundamental misconception of Thomas's notion of beatitude to think of it as involving a contingent causal relation between God and the intellectual subject, though he does speak of God as the "object or cause" of human happiness (S.T. I-II, 3, 1c). Rather what Thomas has in mind is a continuing presence of subject and object to each other, in which the object as final end is known without doubt to be the perfect good that the subject desires and is attained or possessed by the subject in a way that constitutes the perfect happiness of the subject. Thus he writes: "Now, by seeing God just as he is, the soul is filled with every good; the vision unites us with the source of goodness" (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c). Thomas also holds that the condition of perfect beatitude is immutable and cannot be lost. "Beatitude is consummate perfection; it rules out every flaw, and thanks to divine power is granted without shadow of change, so that the blessed are lifted up and share in eternity transcending it" (S.T. I-II, 5, 4 ad 1). The beatific vision, as Thomas understands it, is a permanent condition in which the subject and the good that satisfies it are united. So within that condition there is no question of the subject regarding the object as a means to its own satisfaction which is a state internal to it; rather it recognizes its own dependence on the object and its presence for the satisfaction of its desires, which direct it to the object. The objective last end and the subjective satisfaction that arises from it are not related as cause and effect or as end and means, but as two different aspects of the union of subject and object. It is for this reason that Thomas speaks of the object as constituting happiness or as that "in which happiness consists" and not of the object as causing happiness. As a consequence, God is not to be thought of as a means to be desired for its causal efficacy in satisfying the agent's desires. This, of course, accords with the demands of the Christian religious tradition, which would regard such an attitude to God as absurdly inappropriate and morally presumptuous. It also accords with Augustine's dictum that God is to be enjoyed, but not used.[24]

But even if the agent under the cognitive conditions of the beatific vision is not using God as a means to his own satisfaction, there remains the question of whether a human agent in this life in effect regards God or perfect good as a means to the satisfaction of his desires. But this is a possibility that Thomas rules out when he considers the moral worth of acts of the will.

> An act of will's goodness depends on the end intended. Now the human will's ultimate end is the supreme good, and this is God, as we have shown. For an act of human will to be good, then, it must be ordered to the supreme good. . . . Hence for human willing to be good it has to be conformed to the divine will (S.T. I-II, 19, 9c).

This text raises a difficult problem since it seems to imply that activity that is not explicitly intended to be directed to God cannot be good; but this problem can be handled simply by treating the reference to God as a parenthetical explication of what summum bonum is (quod est Deus). Conformity with the divine will flows as a consequence of being ordered or directed to the supreme good, since that the supreme good is the proper object of the divine will; conformity to the divine will does not, at least in the argument of this article, require knowledge of precisely what God wills or commands. What we are left with is the requirement that the will be directed to the supreme good as its ultimate end. This is more specific than its direction to good in general, a direction which is found even in bad acts. Thomas here asserts the identification of supreme good with God, but does not argue for this claim. What is important for our purposes is that Thomas affirms the necessity for the agent to direct his activity to the supreme good rather than to his own happiness. The supreme good is identical with God, and the happiness of the agent consists in attainment or possession of the supreme good. So the agent's direction of intention in morally good activity can be described in religious or theological terms (the soul's movement to union with God in charity) or in self-interested, prudential terms (the agent's pursuit of his happiness) or in terms which at least allow for a non-interested moral interpretation (the agent's intention of the supreme good). Because of the identification of God with the supreme good and of happiness with the agent's attainment of God, Thomas shifts back and forth from one manner of description to another; and his presentation of his views on the last end of man does not accord a fundamental place to making or preserving distinctions among them.

But some weight may still be given to the fact that he makes his point about the relation of good acts to the last end in terms that are neither explicitly religious nor explicitly eudaemonistic or prudential. As in his considerations about the natural love of God, which we examined earlier, Thomas is working here with a notion of the agent moving toward an ultimate goal that is larger and more comprehensive than his own good but that is at the same time not in radical opposition, either actual or potential, to his own good. This goal is not simply the sum of an agent's desires, the satisfaction of which he might freely renounce without being subject to moral criticism. Rather, in the text under consideration, it is a goal, orientation to which is not a necessary consequence of the will's nature and activity but which imposes something akin to a moral obligation. For the presence or absence of the orientation to the supreme good in a particular human action makes the act good or bad. The absence of this orientation is found in sin which, as we saw earlier, is regarded by Thomas as a turning away from supreme and immutable good. But an explicit turning away from the supreme good is not required for an action to be sinful. Thus, in an article in which he denies that there are indifferent acts in the concrete, Thomas writes:

> Since it is the office of reason to control, if an act issuing from reason is not shaped by due purpose, it will be against reason, and so will have the character of evil, while if it is so shaped it will accord with reasonable order and have the character of good. A human act is bound to be one or the other, that is either having or not having this direction towards a fitting end (S.T. I-II, 18, 9c).

Thomas here is relying on his general views on the four kinds of goodness that are appropriate to a human act, one of which is goodness "according to its end, in other words by its bearing on the ultimate cause of goodness" (S.T. I-II, 18, 4c). Thomas requires that a good action be directed to an appropriate end and that it be directed to the supreme good (S.T. I-II, 19, 9c). He does not require that it be directed to the agent's own happiness, which he thinks the agent seeks even in sinful activity (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c) and to which he thinks that the agent's will is necessarily directed (S.T. I, 82, 1c).

The Possibility of Choices Against One's Happiness

This gap between the optional direction of the will to the supreme good and its necessary direction to the agent's own happiness is partly parallel to the gap between the agent's fidelity to duty and his pursuit of his desire, as this is often conceived. This parallel is even closer if one adopts the determinist thesis that the voluntary agent necessarily acts according to his strongest desire. Even if attainment of the supreme good brings about the satisfaction of all the agent's desires, it is obvious that the agent must, at least in the circumstances of this life, act against at least some of his non-moral desires if he is to meet the demands of duty. So even if right action and pursuit of happiness both eventually lead to God, there is room in Thomas's system for conflicts between duty and desire, of a sort that a this-worldly egoism would not allow. For, as we shall see, the connections between morally right activity and ultimate happiness are not self-evident for Thomas. An important divergence from the conflict of duty and desire as this is normally conceived is that in Thomas's system the agent cannot in acting according to duty choose against his happiness because his will is necessarily inclined to his happiness and because the course of duty in fact leads to the supreme good, the possession of which constitutes his happiness. For Thomas, the agent's surrender of ultimate happiness is neither possible nor praiseworthy. But this does not rule out the possibility that the agent may choose to act in accordance with duty and against non-moral desire; for the function of the agent's natural and necessary inclination to his own happiness is not to convert all the agent's choices to egoistic ones in a way that alters the content of his choices or to ensure the effective predominance of self-regarding motives over other-regarding motives. Thus Thomas does not examine the possibility of conflict between the agent's natural and necessary inclination to his own good or happiness and his natural and necessary inclination to the good in general, though part of his argument that the creature has a greater natural love for God than for itself relies on the identification of God with universal good (S.T. I, 60, 5c). But it seems that even if Thomas wants to affirm that the natural and necessary inclination to good in general is stronger than the natural and necessary inclination to one's own good or one's own happiness, he is also committed a priori to denying conflict between them. For in the case of conflict between two natural and necessary inclinations, it would seem that the agent would have to act against one or the other.

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How, then, for Thomas is the sacrifice of happiness for duty possible, if the agent cannot act against his natural and necessary inclination to his own happiness? How would Thomas deal with the sort of cases described by Anthony Kenny in the following terms?

> People may be trained from childhood to pursue an ideal such as the service of the Party, or obedience to God, without this necessarily being presented to them as a means to their own happiness in this life or in another life. A daughter, from the first moment at which she is of an age to manage her own life, may forego the prospect of marriage and congenial company and creative work in order to nurse a bedridden parent. It is unconvincing to say that such people are seeking their own happiness in as far as they are doing what they want to do. . . .
>
> In the cases I have considered happiness is renounced in favor of some other goal; but it is possible to renounce happiness for other reasons also, e.g., because the only way to achieve one's own happiness may involve the breaking of a promise.[25]

We can begin to handle this difficulty by observing that there is no reason to doubt that Thomas would endorse instances of selfless devotion or, in his terminology, of the love of friendship (S.T. I-II, 26, 4c). As a Christian theologian, he would think such actions both possible and praiseworthy. Now Thomas thinks that the goods proper to the different virtues can be objects of choice (S.T. I-II, 13, 3 *ad* 1); since we are dealing here with goods, the problems presented by the psychological thesis with regard to sinful acts do not arise. The goods proper to the different virtues may not form part of the notion of happiness as Kenny understands it, and they are not made such by being willed or chosen by the individual agent. But they do clearly fall under the notion of good in general and so can be objects of choice. In his discussion of martyrdom, Thomas holds that the good present in virtuous activity can be the basis for surrendering even life itself (S.T. II-II, 124, 3c).

There are open to Thomas two ways of combining such choices with the agent's necessary and natural inclinations to his own happiness; and he employs both of them. The first is to reject Kenny's restriction of what can count as aiming at one's own happiness when he says that "not every long-term goal consistently pursued is capable of constituting an ideal of happiness."[26] Kenny is taking a common sense position against egoism, but he is also moving toward an understanding of happiness which either excludes moral activity altogether as an element in happiness or at least excludes arduous and sacrifical moral activity. Against this we would observe that it seems perfectly plausible that the daughter caring for an invalid parent could reasonably say, "Taking care of my parent makes me happy" or "Serving another is part of my happiness." One need not understand happiness in such a way that moral actions are merely instrumental or preparatory to it. Thus we find that Thomas himself speaks of "active felicity, which consists mainly in the activity of virtue," and which "can be lost when the will degenerates into vice" (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c). Thomas generally follows the view of Aristotle that morally virtuous activity is a secondary constituent of happiness, particularly of happiness in this present life.[27] Thomas's understanding of happiness also differs in another way from Kenny's. For Kenny contrasts virtuous activity with happiness precisely as goals and says that virtuous activity "would be a goal in a different way from happiness, a goal identified with a certain kind of action, and not a goal to be secured by action."[28] But, for Thomas as for Aristotle, happiness is an activity (S.T. I-II, 3, 2c). So Thomas can hold that morally virtuous activity is a partial constituent of happiness and that choosing the good involved in virtue, even when it is especially arduous, is a choice for happiness, at least for the virtuous activity that is constitutive of happiness. Thomas does admit that in the circumstances of this present life the happiness present in virtuous activity can be severely restricted. Thus he writes: "And even if virtue remains unimpaired, external changes can upset the happiness of the active life, at least by hindering good deeds, though they cannot take them away completely, since a man displays active virtue when he honourably sustains his adversities" (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c). Thomas stresses the partial character of our happiness in this life and the gap between what we desire and what we are able to obtain by our activities and choices (S.T. I-II, 5, 3c). Thomas need not have unrealistic expectations about the felicific effects of our virtuous activity, nor need he be defining happiness in an arbitrary way, in order to maintain that a choice for virtuous activity is a choice for what is partially and normally a constituent of happiness. This line of defense does not rely on beliefs about an afterlife or about divine rewards and punishments. It is liable to criticism mainly on the ground that it interprets devoted and sacrificial activity as directed to the agent's happiness and thus seems to allow an egoistic interpretation of cases of sacrifical behavior which serve as standard counter-examples to the claims of psychological egoism.

The other principal way of combining the possibility of sacrificial choices for duty with the agent's natural and necessary inclination to this happiness is the standard theological move of relying on God's judgment to ensure that duty and happiness ultimately coincide. This is the move that is presupposed when Bishop Butler writes:

> Conscience and self-love, if we understand our true happiness, always lead us the same way. Duty and interest are perfectly coincident; for the most part, in this world, but entirely and in every instance if we take in the future, and the whole; this being implied in the notion of a good and perfect administration of things. Thus they who have been so wise in their generation as to regard only their own supposed interest, at the expense and to the injury of others, shall at last find, that he who has given up all the advantages of the present world, rather than violate his conscience and the relations of life, has infinitely better provided for himself, and secured his own interest and happiness.[29]

Since Thomas left the Third Part of the Summa Theologiae incomplete at the time of his death he did not leave us an explicit account of his final views on eschatology and the doctrine of divine rewards and punishments. But in his earlier theological synthesis, the Summa Contra Gentiles of 1261-62, he takes several positions that are part of the traditional Christian view that God, as part of his providential governance of the world, ensures that those who are faithful to their duty and who do what is morally right are eventually rewarded and attain happiness.[30] Thus he writes:

> Now God has imposed on men's acts a certain order in relation to the final good. . . . So it must be, if this order is rightly laid down, that those who proceed according to this

> order will attain the final good, and this is to be rewarded; but those who depart from this order by means of sin must be cut off from the final good, and this is to be punished (S.C.G. III, 140).

This is a formulation, which identifies reward and punishment with the attainment or non-attainment of the goal of the activity of rational creatures. Here Thomas's God comes close to functioning in the way envisaged by Kant where he speaks of "a cause of the whole of nature, itself distinct from nature, which contains the ground of the exact coincidence of happiness with morality.[31] A bit later in the same chapter, Thomas offers another formulation that is perhaps closer to Butler in spirit than to Kant;

> Therefore it is the function of divine providence to offer men good things as a reward, so that their will may be moved to make right progress, and to set forth evil things as punishment so that their will may avoid disorder (S.C.G. III, 140).

Here Thomas moves beyond affirming the existence of a being who proportions happiness to desert or who bestows bliss on the virtuous to a motivating use of the notion of divine rewards and punishments. This motivating use seems to involve a reliance on non-moral sanctions to induce moral behavior on the part of human agents. It is compatible with and relies upon the agent's natural and necessary inclination to his own happiness. It leads to an interpretation of Thomas on eudaemonistic and heteronomous lines, in which the imperatives of morality are merely hypothetical commands to take the steps that are necessary to one's own happiness. As we shall see in the following chapter, this would not be an adequate account of some important elements in Thomas's ethical thought. But there is certainly one side of Thomas's account of human activity which relies not simply on an ultimate congruence of virtue and happiness, which, one might think, is required both by God's justice and by his benevolence, but which also relies on an appeal to the human agent's sense of his own interest as this is affected by the prospect of divine rewards and punishments.

But this appeal to interested motives by invoking divine rewards and punishments should not be regarded as a straightforward endorsement of egoism as an ultimate principle of conduct. This is partly because Thomas's account of human activity includes both a natural and necessary inclination to one's own good and a natural and necessary inclination to good in general, partly because Thomas has a notion of good in which the distinction between moral and non-moral good is not fundamental, partly because the end of personal happiness which Thomas puts before the agent is not attainable by his own activity but depends on God's judgment of his moral worth. We have already seen that the agent's natural and necessary inclination to good in general takes him beyond egoism and the goal of his own happiness. So it is possible for the appeal to the agent to seek his own good to be an instrument leading him beyond his own good in which it is included.

Rewards, Punishments, and the Order of Goods

The distinction between moral and non-moral good, though present in Thomas's thought, is less fundamental than the distinction between goods that are the objects of intellectual appetite and those that are the object of sense appetite. This classification of goods corresponds to and is based on a distinction between sense and intellect, sensible and intellectual, that is fundamental to Thomas's psychology, epistemology, and ontology. We have already indicated some of the problems that arise from Thomas in his account of human activity as a result of his reliance on this fundamental distinction. Among them are his tendency to interpret sin as a preference for sensible and material goods over spiritual and intellectual goods even though this is not compatible with a Christian understanding of sin, and the ambiguity that marks his concept of will, which is both the appetite of the intellect and the power of choice for the composite being.

Recognition of the fundamental character of the sensible-intellectual distinction helps us to understand the account of divine punishments that Thomas gives in the Summa Contra Gentiles, III, 141. Thomas begins by pointing to the motivating function of rewards and punishments in stimulating and restraining the will. He then says:

> So, just as it is essential to a reward that it be a good that is agreeable to the will, so it is essential to punishment that it be an evil and contrary to will. Now, evil is a privation of the good. Hence the diversity and order of punishments must depend on the diversity and order of goods.
>
> Now felicity is the highest good for man, for it is his ultimate end, and the nearer anything is to this end, the higher the place that it occupies among man's goods. But the nearest thing to it is virtue, and any other things, if there be such which helps man in good action whereby he attains happiness. Next comes the proper disposition of his reason and of the powers subject to it. After this

> comes soundness of body, which is needed for ready action. In final place are external things which we use as aids to virtue.
>
> So, the greatest punishment will be for man to be cut off from happiness. After this ranks deprivation of virtue and of any perfection of the natural powers of the soul that is related to good action. Next comes the disorder of the natural powers of the soul; then, bodily injury; and finally, the taking away of exterior goods" (S.C.G. III, 141).

Thomas here bases the order of punishment on an objective order of goods, and not on the subjective preferences of agents. The objective order of goods corresponds to the ranking of faculties and appetites that is characteristic of Thomas's psychology and that takes as fundamental the distinction between intellectual and sensitive cognition and appetite. Now, as Thomas acknowledges, the ranking of punishments according to the objective order of goods creates a problem; for it is essential to his notion of punishment that it be not merely an evil, which for him is the privation of a good appropriate to a thing, but that it also be contrary to the will of the person being punished. Thomas observes:

> It happens at times that what deprives one of the greater good is less repugnant to the will and thus seems to be less punishing (S.C.G. III, 141).

He admits that there are persons who would in effect reverse the ranking of punishments laid down:

> With them, injuries of the body are deemed the greatest punishment, together with the loss of external things; whereas they regard disorder of soul, loss of virtue, and the deprivation of divine enjoyment, in which man's ultimate felicity consists, as of slight or no importance (S.C.G. III, 141).

Thomas has really two different notions of punishment with which he works in this section of the Summa Contra Gentiles. The first is the common-sense understanding of rewards and punishments that shows up in both legal and religious contexts; in this notion punishments are extrinsic to the activity which is being punished; thus evil acts can be punished by inflicting unpleasant states of feeling on the person who has done them. Punishment in this view is administered by another; and it is logically possible for an act to go unpunished, since the act of punishment is a separate event from the evil act that is being punished. Thomas does not believe that in fact God allows any evil act to go unpunished (S.T. I-II, 91, 4c). The good of which a person is deprived in punishment is usually not the same as the good that he rejected in his voluntary evil act. In so far as he has voluntarily chosen to reject that good he is unlikely to feel the deprivation of it as a punishment. There are, of course, exceptions to this generalization, sometimes arising from second thoughts and from a re-evaluation after disappointment occurring after the attainment of some other good, or sometimes occurring at the moment of choice itself, when there is a strong conflict between the agent's desire for what he chooses and his desire for a good that in the circumstances of the moment he rejects but to which he still feels a strong attraction. But there remains a presumption that deprivation of a good which a person has voluntarily rejected is not going to be "against the will" of the agent; so the deprivation of the good of virtue in the case of a habitual sinner will not be felt as something contrary to his will. Such a deprivation will not have the motivating power that Thomas ascribes to rewards and punishments. So, though Thomas does not advert to this point, the normal course for human law to follow is to punish persons by depriving them of goods that presumably everyone wants, regardless of his moral dispositions. (God, by reason of his omniscience, can devise punishments that meet the condition of being against the will of the sinner, no matter how eccentric or perverse his desires may be.) It seems safe to say that something like this extrinsic and quasi-legal notion of punishment has figured in the minds of many Western religious people when they thought of divine rewards and punishments. It is easy to see how, when they are conceived this way, divine rewards and punishments are thought to form part of a motivating appeal to the agent's long-term self-interest in the hope of persuading him to do the morally right thing or to act according to a moral virtue because this will enable him either to attain a non-moral good or to avoid a non-moral evil. As we have seen, such a notion of punishment is present when Thomas speaks of the motivating effects of rewards and punishments (S.C.G. III, 141), and also in the following passage when he speaks of the punishment that is appropriate to sin because the sinner prefers his own will to God's:

> Now this inequity is removed when, against his will, man is forced to suffer something in accord with divine ordering (S.C.G. III, 140).

The extrinsic notion of punishment is particularly prominent when Thomas argues that sinners are to be punished by painful experiences:

> But no one fears to lose what he does not desire to obtain. So, those who have their will turned away from the ultimate end do not fear to be cut off from it. Thus, they cannot be restrained from sinning simply by exclusion from the ultimate end. Therefore, another punishment must also be used for sinners, which they may fear while they are sinners (S.C.G. III, 145).

But Thomas also has an intrinsic notion of punishment. In morally wrong activity there is a deprivation of good that is appropriate to the agent and so is an evil (S.T. I-II, 18, 3c). The person who habitually acts against virtue is deprived of the good of virtue. This is a necessary result of the agent's activity and does not depend on the administrative or judicial activity of another person. (We might be inclined to think of this deprivation of good as part of the costs of choice rather than as punishment.) The good that one is deprived of is precisely the good that one rejects, and the severity of punishment corresponds to the ranking of the good that one is deprived of in the objective order of goods. This intrinsic conception of punishment is present in the parallel already cited between the order of punishments and the order of goods (S.C.G. III, 141). It figures importantly in what Thomas says about punishment with regard to the final end of man. He writes:

> Now God has imposed on men's acts a certain order in relation to the final good. . . . So it must be, if this order is rightly laid down, that those who proceed according to this order will attain the final good, and this is to be rewarded: but those who depart from this order by means of sin must be cut off from the final good, and this is to be punished (S.C.G. III, 140).

The language that Thomas uses here, we may ~~note~~ in passing, is compatible with a divine command theory of ethical norms, though it is also compatible with the view that natural law expresses the will of the creator of nature.

In this intrinsic notion of punishment, however, Thomas does make some distinction between the punishment, which is an evil, and the rejection of good in a sinful choice, which is also an evil. Both of these evils involve the subject's deprivation of what is essentially the same good; but Thomas regards them as distinct kinds of evil, which he speaks of in the *Summa Theologiae* as the evil of fault (*malum culpae*) and the evil of penalty (*malum poenae*) (*S.T.* I, 48, 6c). This distinction is already implicitly present in the section of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* on rewards and punishments that we are examining. Thomas writes:

> For thus is the equality of justice preserved: in whatever way man voluntarily turns away from his end by sinning, in the same way in the order of punishment, involuntarily (*contra suam voluntatem*), he is impeded in regard to the attainment of his end (*S.C.G.* III, 143).

Thomas is here reiterating his earlier requirement that punishment be an evil contrary to the will of the one being punished. The loss of a good or the acceptance of an evil in sinful activity is, as we saw earlier, at least to some extent according to the will of the one sinning. So what Thomas offers here is not an identification of sin and punishment but an ethical congruence (by which "is the equality of justice preserved") between sin and punishment. This same sort of relation between sin and punishment is also present in a second argument that Thomas offers and that turns on his notion of sin as aversio or turning away from perfect good.

> Now, in the man who commits a mortal sin, the intention of his will is completely turned away from his ultimate end . . . Therefore, for the one who sins mortally, this is the proper punishment: to be completely cut off from the attainment of the end (S.C.G. III, 143).

What Thomas has in mind, as is shown in the following chapter on eternal punishment, is the perpetual exclusion of the agent from his last end. The rejection of the supreme good by the individual human agent is his sin; his continuing exclusion from it is his punishment. So what Thomas offers here is a modified intrinsic notion of punishment, in which there is another person who perpetuates the privation of good which the agent has at one time voluntarily brought about but which has since become contrary to his will. Thus he says in the Summa Theologiae: "God is the author of the evil of penalty, but not of the evil of fault" (S.T. I, 48, 6c). Now if punishment is conceived as the continuing and perpetual privation of a good that one has once voluntarily rejected, then it is being presupposed that one's rejection of the good is a temporary aberration. It may be the result of an error of judgment which is corrected in the light of fuller knowledge or of weakness of will in which one yields to a lesser immediate good. But clearly, if the punishment is to be against the will of the one being punished, the one being punished must acknowledge, at least to himself, that that of which he is being deprived really is a good for him and must regret the loss of good that is involved in his punishment (not necessarily the loss of good that was involved in his sin). It is, of course, plausible that one who sins through weakness of will or through ignorance will, in the light of further experience and suffering, come to such acknowledgment and regret. A person who did not come to such acknowledgment and regret might recognize that another person was trying to punish him; but he would not feel that he was actually being punished. Thus a spinach-hating child might recognize that his parents were trying to punish him by forbidding him to eat spinach, but he would know that they were not succeeding since they were not inflicting on him an evil that was against his will. Now this modified intrinsic notion of punishment has the unfortunate consequence that those who acknowledge their past ignorance and weakness are deprived of a good which they later genuinely desire, whereas those who remain obdurate in their rejection of a good are indeed deprived of that good but are not actually punished. Here we see recurring in a somewhat different form the difficulty that Thomas has in dealing with sins of malice. So Thomas turns back to the extrinsic notion of punishment in order to deal with those sinners who "cannot be restrained from sinning simply by exclusion from the ultimate end." This sort of punishment involves "the experience of something painful" and is aimed at the sinner's adoption of other things as his goals (S.C.G. III, 145). But this leaves the sinner unaffected by what Thomas himself holds to be the greater punishments.

An alternative that is open to Thomas, but that he does not explore is the possibility that the changed cognitive conditions of the afterlife may produce a change in the desires and choices of the hardened sinner in such a way that his exclusion from God, the supreme good and final end, would come to be against his will. This would resolve the difficulty about punishment but would raise other problems. Thomas rejects the doctrine of reincarnation and holds an essentially static view of the desires and situations of persons in the afterlife. Thomas rejects the view of Origen that "since every created will is free, it can always turn either to good or to evil" (S.T. I, 64, 2c). The blessed on his view see that God is perfectly good; their desires are satisfied, and their happiness cannot be lost (S.T. I-II, 5, 5c). Their wills are directed to God in such a way that they cannot sin (S.T. I, 62, 8c). But the reason for this necessary movement of their wills is that they see "the divine essence, which is goodness pure and unalloyed (ipsa essentia bonitatis)" (S.T. I-II, 4, 4c). Now the damned do not have this beatifying vision, though they presumably have some knowledge of their situation; but this knowledge would not be such as to produce a necessary movement of love to the supreme good in their wills. For a situation in which God inflicts eternal punishment on creatures who love him is obviously morally unsatisfactory. But something like this seems to be required if the deprivation of the vision of God is in fact to be against the will of the sinner. In the case of the fallen angels, Thomas argues that their will is fixed in evil but he bases this conclusion on the mode of choice proper to the angelic will "which cleaves to its object in a fixed unchanging way" (S.T. I, 64, 2c). He contrasts this with the alternation of choice that is characteristic of human beings and promises to consider the question of the fixation in evil of damned human beings" (S.T. I, 64, 2c); but this topic belongs to the unwritten section of the Third Part of the Summa Theologiae.

In Book IV of the Summa Contra Gentiles, Thomas holds that change with regard to the desire for a particular thing as one's ultimate end is possible for the will only so long as the soul is united to the body. He claims:

> When it shall, then, be separated from the body it will not be in a state of motion toward the end, but in a state of rest in the end acquired. The soul's will, therefore, will be immovable regarding a desire for the ultimate end (S.C.G. IV, 95).

But this does not amount to an argument so much as a repetition of the original claim that the soul's will is fixed at the moment of death. Here Thomas is speaking for the mainstream theological tradition; and the effective basis for his claim is the common Christian view of life as a limited period of testing and probation. Now Thomas does have a reason why the blessed are fixed in good, namely that they see God who is perfectly good and so have no desire for any other good; but he does not have, so far as we can see, a corresponding account of why the human will should be fixed in evil. In the apocalyptic discourse in Matthew 24 and the eschatological parables of Matthew 25, there is clearly a contrast between the present time in which choices of good and evil are to be made and the age to come in which rewards and punishments are distributed according to earlier choices but in which there is no question of further important choices. Howard Kee remarks of the vision of the last judgment in Matthew 25, 31-46 that, though it reflects special Matthaean concerns, "it preserves a theme that is found throughout the gospel tradition: that the decisions made by men now in relation to Jesus are determinative of their destiny in the age to come."[32] What Christians have believed and what Thomas himself maintains is that there is a divinely established contrast between two periods of time marked by radically different conditions, this life and the age to come. Choices made in this life are determinative for the individual's fortunes in the age to come. But the religious affirmation of such a view does not constitute a philosophical argument that in an afterlife choice is impossible or irreversible. Obviously, however, allowing the possibility of morally significant changes in choices in an afterlife would alter the way in which an afterlife is relevant to human choices in the present order of things and would seriously modify the common Christian account of this life as a probationary state. Once again, as in the problem of sins of malice, we see a lack of fit between the Biblical framework that Thomas accepts as a Christian and the philosophical concepts that he is working with.

Rewards, Punishments, and Egoism

But our present concern is not with Thomas's ideas about divine rewards and punishments, but with the bearing of his views about these matters on his views about the motivational basis of human action and specifically of morality. Does Thomas propound, as some have thought, a view of human motivation which effectively adds an egoistic qualification to the psychological thesis, which thus becomes: every choice is of the good for the chooser? Does his view use divine sanctions as means of making morally good actions advantageous to the agent and so both eligible by him and attractive to him? Now the extrinsic notion of punishment lends itself to this interpretation, and efforts have been made to present Thomas as teaching a heteronomous other-worldly eudaemonism, in which the demands of morality are by divine rewards and punishments, incorporated into the agent's career of pursuing his own happiness.[33]

Now there are important aspects of Thomas's ethical thought which do not fit into this framework, for instance, his account of natural law and the central place that he accords to the good present in virtuous activity. More fundamentally we can see from the whole structure of his account of the natural inclinations and appetites of human persons and from the hierarchical order in which he ranks them (as illustrated in his discussion of the order of goods and punishments in S.C.G. III, 141), that Thomas is not interested in simply ratifying the actual desires of individual persons, whose estimates of goods may well be radically mistaken, or in assuring them that their desires as they determine them will all be satisfied. Rather he wants people to conform their desires to the objective order of goods. So he writes:

> Since external goods are subordinated to internal goods, and body to soul, external and bodily goods are good for man to the extent that they contribute to the good of reason, but to the extent that they hinder the rational good they turn into evils for man (S.C.G. III, 141).

In this passage, Thomas puts in positive terms the normative order of goods which is presupposed in much of what he says about sin, especially as a turning to mutable goods. There is also present here Thomas's tendency to speak of the lesser bodily and external goods as instrumental to the higher goods of contemplation and moral activity, without specifying in any detail just how this instrumental connection really works. A passage such as this should make clear how alien from Thomas's thought is the possibility that the agent would simply be free to determine for himself just what constitutes his happiness independently of the normative order of goods. Thomas is committed to reject a plan of life that in effect makes higher goods instrumental to lower goods; as we suggested earlier, he is more concerned about the distinction between goods that are the objects of intellectual appetites and those that are the objects of sensitive appetites than he is with a distinction between goods based on the distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding desires.

Thomas's use of the extrinsic notion of punishment aims precisely at inciting human persons to do good actions and to avoid evil actions and thus attempts to make human desires for lesser goods serve the higher goods. But this aim of punishment is present primarily in the mind of the legislator and judge, God, and need not be accepted by those who are potentially subject to punishment. Punishment understood in the extrinsic sense does not presuppose in those to whom it is threatened or on whom it is inflicted a settled and reflective preference for lesser goods over higher goods; for it may serve to strengthen a person's will when lesser goods are momentarily more attractive. But it does seem to be compatible with such a preference. The intrinsic notion of punishment, on the other hand, presupposes a settled and reflective desire for higher goods, at least if it is to meet the second necessary condition for punishment, namely that punishment be against the will of the one being punished. It does allow for episodes of weakness in which the person liable to punishment momentarily prefers a lesser good or one that is incompatible with goods that he prefers "in a cool hour." The difficulty with the intrinsic notion of punishment, as we argued earlier, is that it does not affect those who have no desires for higher goods as a punishment. But the intrinsic notion of punishment does involve continuity and homogeneity of desires, that is, the desires for the goods to which human agents are to be stimulated by the whole process of reward and punishment are the same as the desires for the goods which may be withdrawn from them by this same process, for the simple reason that the goods are the same. If the good that one loses by immoral activity and the good that one loses in being punished for immoral activity are both the same, that is, the state or condition of being morally good, then there is no question of the punishment's involving a heterogeneous or non-moral motive or desire.

In this regard, there is a certain affinity between Thomas's position and Kant's, even though there remain profound differences. In The Critique of Practical Reason Kant affirms that the Christian principle of morality "places the real incentive for obedience to the law not in the desired consequences of obedience, but in the conception of duty alone."[34] Now if one were to substitute "rational good" where Kant has "duty," one would arrive at Thomas's position: for rewards and punishments that lie outside the realm of rational good, which for Thomas comprises the virtuous activity of theoretical and practical reason, are inherently less valuable for Thomas and should not be the ends of rationally good activity but rather the means to such activity. Thomas would, I think, agree with Kant that morality does not "provide rules for selfish wishes" and "is not really the doctrine of how to make ourselves happy but of how we are to be worthy of happiness."[35] For Thomas himself holds with Kant that as a human agent, I cannot hope to attain the highest good "except through the agreement of my will with that of a holy and beneficent author of the world."[36] Like Kant, he locates the attainment of happiness outside this world (S.T. I-II, 5, 3c) and makes it dependent on the judgment of a just and benevolent God and not a simple consequence of the exercise of human powers (S.T. I-II, 5, 6c). But Thomas, as we have seen, does not have Kant's scruples about the use of fear and hope as incentives. He does not himself sharply distinguish between the extrinsic and the intrinsic conceptions of punishment, and so he leaves the whole question of whether persons may regard moral goodness, virtuous activity and conformity to moral law as means to their own happiness unresolved. On the one hand, he insists on a normative order of goods in which happiness is at least partially constituted by morally virtuous activity and which persons are not free to disregard in the pursuit of their own happiness. On the other hand, he seems to allow that within the limits of this life

God himself, the supreme good, may be chosen as a means to the agent's ultimate end, his own happiness. So it would seem that a fortiori moral goodness may be regarded as a means to one's own happiness. Similarly, Thomas offers an understanding of rewards and punishments that on one side encourages the agent to accept moral constraints so as to avoid pain and ensure his long-range self-interest and that on the other side presupposes that the agent's desires for higher goods will be such that deprivation of them will be effective punishment and that attainment of them will be sufficient reward. His understanding of rewards and punishments in the next life does not commit him to an ultimate reliance on self-interest as the decisive motive for morally good action; but at the same time, it does not commit him to the view that the morally good is to be done for its own sake alone. The situation is in fact that there are elements in Thomas's thought that are egoistic and that would require him to regard moral rules as hypothetical imperatives guiding the agent's pursuit of his long-term happiness and there are other elements that allow for a disinterested pursuit of moral goodness for its own sake as a constitutive part of happiness that is of more than merely instrumental value.

The main element that, taken by itself, would lead Thomas in the direction of psychological egoism is the natural and necessary movement of the agent's will to his own happiness. But, as we have indicated, Thomas also maintains that there is an even more fundamental movement of the will to good in general, not simply to the good of the agent. The principal way that Thomas has of bringing these two movements together is by holding that they are both directed to God, who is both universal good and the object in which the agent's own happiness is to be realized. Thomas's belief in the attainability of such an object by human agents enables him to hold together views that, taken in isolation, would lead either to an acceptance of ethical egoism or to an endorsement of a kind of sacrifical universalism, in which the agent's own good is submerged in the movement of the whole to good in general. It also enables him to resolve present conflicts between different principles and tendencies by maintaining their ultimate harmony. Our discussion of the egoistic elements in Thomas's system has endeavored to show that, while Thomas undeniably regards the practical life of human agents as being fundamentally directed to the satisfaction of their own appetites, there is sufficient room in his system for the development of a point of view which counsels renunciation of desire, urges the practice of the moral virtues, and recognizes moral obligations, all of which can cut across the agent's pursuit of his own satisfaction. The four principal sources of this space for morality in what might otherwise be an ethically empty teleological scheme are: first, the spiritual and non-economic character of the goods that Thomas takes to be the primary objects of human desire, which makes long term conflicts about these goods inappropriate; second, the physical and temporal discontinuity between the actions that Thomas thinks are appropriate and morally required in this life and the attainment of perfect beatitude in the next life, which allows for the possibility that morally right actions may be related to beatitude in more ways than simply as means that are causally necessary for the attainment of the end; third, Thomas's insistence on a ranking of goods that is taken to be independent of the preferences of particular agents, which makes possible the imposition of norms or constraints on an agent's actual desires; fourth, Thomas's view that the last end is God, a definite personal being capable of making moral judgments and of issuing commands, the attainment of union with whom is logically distinct from the agent's satisfaction of his desires or the realization of a plan of life chosen by the agent himself. The presence of these elements in Thomas's account of the practical life of human persons ensures that in Thomas's system there can be fundamental conflicts (at least within the limits of this life) between duty and the desires of the agent, that morality is not simply an institution subscribed to on prudential grounds by agents intent on satisfying the desires which they have chosen to regard as constitutive of their happiness, and that the last end is conceived in such a way that the satisfaction of at least some desires can be excluded as incompatible with it. Thus Thomas's system, despite its inclusion of some doctrines that can be regarded as egoistic in tendency avoids most of the objectionable features of egoism and at least provides a very close parallel to the moral institution of life, in Bishop Butler's phrase. As our discussion of natural law in the final chapter will indicate, it probably gives a more accurate picture of Thomas's account of human practical life to regard it as maintaining an ultimate harmony between morality and self-interest, a harmony assured by God, rather than to regard it as making morality an instrument of a long-term other-worldly egoism.

Footnotes to Chapter IV

[1] See Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, I. 1. 1094a1-5.

[2] The Latin text here does not commit Thomas to the view that the end determines the will in any way incompatible with free choice.

[3] Anthony Kenny, "Happiness," in Moral Concepts, ed. Joel Feinberg (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 44.

[4] John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism, in Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society, ed. J. M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), p. 235.

[5] Kenny, "Happiness", p. 45.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] St. Augustine, City of God, XIV. 9.

[9] William James, "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life" in Essays on Faith and Morals, ed. Ralph Barton Perry (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1962), p. 213.

[10] John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism, p. 218.

[11] Thus D. J. O'Connor singles out this passage (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c) as showing an ambiguous use of bonum universale as "(1) good in general which is the object of the will, and (2) the universal good which is identical with God": Aquinas and Natural Law, (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 27.

[12] See Stuart Hampshire, Thought and Action (New York: Viking, 1960), p. 206: "But there is a sense in which I could not set myself to do what he is doing, namely, to ask God's forgiveness for my sins, unless I believe that God exists and that a sense can be attached to the notion of God's forgiveness and of human sin. The 'cannot' here represents a logical impossibility."

[13] Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, ed. C. B. Macpherson (Baltimore: Penguin, 1968), pp. 160-161.

[14] Ibid., p. 161.

[15] Ibid., p. 120.

[16] Ibid., p. 161.

[17] David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, Book III, Part II, Section II, "Of the Origin of Justice and Property," in Hume's Moral and Political Philosophy, ed. Henry David Aiken (Darien, Conn.: Hafner, 1970), p. 63.

[18] Here Aquinas echoes what Aristotle says about the happiness of the gods in Nicomachean Ethics X. 8. 1178b7-23.

[19] William K. Frankena, Ethics, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 21.

[20] Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, tr. Philip S. Watson (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 643.

[21] Ibid., p. 642

[22] Translated as On the Truth of the Catholic Faith by Vernon J. Bourke (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956). All subsequent quotations from the Summa Contra Gentiles are from this translation.

[23] Aristotle, De Anima II. 4. 415b2.

[24] St. Augustine, De Doctrina Christiana I. 4.

[25] Anthony Kenny, "Happiness", p. 48.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, X. 8. 1178a8-21.

[28] Kenny, p. 49.

[29] Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham, Fifteen Sermons, Sermon 3, "Upon the Natural Supremacy of Conscience"; in British Moralists 1650-1800, ed. D.D. Raphael (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 360-361.

[30] For a discussion of the date of this work, see Ignatius Eschmann, O.P., "A Catalogue of St. Thomas's Works," in Etienne Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, tr. L. K. Shook, C.S.B. (New York: Random House, 1956), pp. 385-386.

[31] Immanuel Kant, Critique of Practical Reason, tr. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1956), p. 129.

[32] Howard Kee, "The Gospel According to Matthew," in The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible (Nashville: Abingdon, 1971), p. 639.

[33] Such interpretations of Thomas are criticized by Hans Reiner "Wesen und Grund der sittlichen Verbindlichkeit (Obligatio) bei Thomas von Aquin," in Walberberger Studien I, pp.238-40. (Mainz; Matthias Grunewald Verlag. n.d.).

[34] Kant, p. 134.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

CHAPTER V

THE ULTIMATE END: GOD AS THE OBJECT OF CONTEMPLATION

In this chapter we continue our consideration of Thomas's views on the ultimate end of human activity, but the problems to be considered have to do mainly with the ways in which God, serving as the object of human contemplative activity, is or produces the complete satisfaction of our desires.

Even though the beatifying experience of contemplation as Thomas conceives it involves a union of subject and of object, we can say in a general way that our emphasis shifts from the subjective problem of the egoism of the human agent to a series of problems about the object of the activity. These may be briefly put. First, does Thomas conceive of the human person's last end as a dominant or an inclusive end? Second, can he show that the last end as he conceives it is in fact desired and intended by all human persons? Third, can he show that the last end as he conceives it actually does satisfy all desires?

Inclusive or Dominant End

The distinction between dominant and inclusive ends is taken from W.F.R. Hardie's article, "The Final Good in Aristotle's Ethics." Hardie argues that in the Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle runs together: 1) an understanding of happiness as "a secondary end, the full and harmonious achievement of primary ends" and 2) his "explicit view," which "makes the supreme end, not inclusive, but dominant, the object of one prime desire, philosophy."[1] The dominant conception of the end is at the basis of Aristotle's claim, later taken up by Aquinas, that human happiness consists in the contemplative activity of "the best thing in us."[2] The inclusive conception of the end is presented by Hardie as involving the reflective planning by the agent of his life so as to attain a plurality of goods:

> A man, reflecting on his various desires and interests, notes that some mean more to him than others, that some are more, some less, difficult and costly to achieve; that the attainment of one may, in different degrees, promote or hinder the attainment of others. By such reflection he is moved to plan to achieve at least his most important objectives as fully as possible. The following of such a plan is roughly what is sometimes meant by the pursuit of happiness. The desire for happiness, so understood, is the desire for the orderly and harmonious gratification of desires.[3]

Two observations should be made about Hardie's conception of an inclusive end. First, the language that he uses with its stress on "desires" and "interests" is importantly different from Aristotle's insistence that activity constitutes happiness, an insistence that is repeated by Thomas (S.T. I-II, 3, 2c).[4] In his presentation of the notion of inclusive end Hardie glides from the undeniable truths that we have a plurality of desires and that there are a variety of objects that satisfy them to the more disputable contention that we have or ought to have a plurality of important objectives. Thus Aristotle, even when he is arguing for contemplative activity as the dominant final end, admits that as human beings in the circumstances of this life we have need for a plurality of goods. (As we shall see, Thomas is more interested in contemplative activity under the circumstances of a future life; and there he makes stronger claims for the self-sufficiency of contemplative activity.) So there is some reason to think that Hardie is to some extent misreading Aristotle's use of the notion of dominant end, both because Aristotle is more interested in finding a central activity to be carried on in one's life than in pointing to a single source of satisfaction and because Aristotle does not regard contemplative activity as satisfying all our needs and desires.

Secondly, there is a definite normative position that Hardie is staking out in drawing his distinction between inclusive and dominant ends. This becomes overt when he speaks of "the obvious and correct reply" to the question put by Aristotle in Eudemian Ethics I. 2, about what constitutes the good life, which is "that the life which is best for a man cannot lie in gaining only one of his objects at the cost of losing all the rest." To this Hardie adds the comment: "This would be too high a price to pay even for philosophy."[5] Now it seems that Hardie is here making both a conceptual mistake and an erroneous normative judgement, even though the position that he is espousing seems to be the essence of sweet reasonableness. For it is possible for a person to organize his life around a central objective and to regard the satisfaction of his other desires and needs not as separate objectives to be pursued for their own sakes but as means more or less closely related to the attainment of the dominant end. It is possible that a person who organizes his life in this way will be one-sided or unbalanced, but I doubt that it can be shown that there is anything inherently irrational in such a way of planning one's life.

Nor need we take Hardie's claim that we should aim at a plurality of objects as an unexceptionable normative judgment. We may first point out that it goes against a deep and characteristic aspect of religious commitment, which Jesus expressed in the Gospel of Matthew in the following short parables:

> The kingdom of heaven is like treasure lying buried in a field. The man who found it, buried it again; and for sheer joy went and sold everything he had, and bought that field.
>
> Here is another picture of the kingdom of heaven. A merchant looking out for fine pearls found one of very special value; so he went and sold everything he had, and bought it (Mt. 13, 44-46).

The precise ways in which religious commitment and devotion to the one pearl of great price might be related to a rational plan of life is a difficult question, but I would argue that we should not accept a concept of a rational plan of life that a priori rules out such commitment and devotion. It is an important part of the richness of a moral community that some of its members are willing to go to great lengths in endeavor and sacrifice in order to achieve certain values or to realize certain ideals that they make the dominant ends of their lives.[6] Making this point does not imply that all instances of devotion to an ideal as a dominant end, even to a religious or moral ideal, are morally acceptable or that such a way of organizing one's life is obligatory or beneficial for all persons.

Rather, it affirms that we should not exclude the ways of life of saints and heroes and of other persons who adopt dominant ends that are not harmful or unworthy from the range of rational plans of life.

We note that John Rawls, in his consideration of dominant-end views in A Theory of Justice, concedes that adopting a dominant end "does not strictly speaking violate the principles of rational choice." He regards adoption of such views as "mad" and a "disfigurement of the self," undertaken for the sake of system. He insists that "human good is heterogeneous because the aims of the self are heterogeneous."[7] To this we would reply that the aims (as contrasted with the needs) of the individual self may or may not be heterogeneous and that the charge of the disfigurement of the self can only be assessed when one considers what the dominant end is that the self seeks and how the self understands this dominant end and with what degree of flexibility or rigidity the self pursues it. It should also be granted that ways of life in which relations of love and commitment to other persons and attitudes of religious devotion occupy the central place may be more appropriately thought of as complex interpersonal interactions than in terms of the pursuit of dominant ends; but that is a large issue that would take us from the current project.

With so much said by way of comment on the notions of dominant and inclusive ends, we must now turn to the question of how Thomas understands the final ends of human persons in relation to the distinction between these two conceptions of ultimate ends. We will find that Thomas does not take issue in any fundamental way with Aristotle's views on the ultimate end of human life, but that he fits these views into a broader theological framework and employs some added notions such as sin and law, which are not fundamental for Aristotle. For these reasons, the whole issue is more complex in Aquinas than in Aristotle. Aquinas, however, comes closer to an explicit consideration of the issues raised by this classification of ends than does Aristotle. For one of the definitions of happiness that he works with is that given by Boethius: "a state made complete by all good things being gathered together (status omnium bonorum aggregatione perfectus)."[8] Thomas first brings this notion into his consideration of human happiness when he considers the question whether happiness is a state or an activity, and so the part of the definition that most interests him is its first word, status. He does not reject the Boethian definition but assigns it a secondary place:

> In designating (definiendo) happiness, Boethius covers all that goes with it, in general, namely the completion in common of every good, (communem beatitudinis rationem), and this he signified by a state made perfect by the bringing together of all goods, thus implying that a person in bliss is in a settled condition of full goodness. Aristotle's definition, however, is more pointed, and expresses the essence of happiness by marking what puts him in this state, namely an activity of some sort (S.T. I-II, 3, 2 ad 2).

Since Thomas follows Aristotle in maintaining that happiness is an activity, he has to grant that the happiness attainable in this present life falls short of the condition of beatitude described by Boethius. So Thomas says:

> Final perfection for men in their present life is their cleaving to God by activity which, however, cannot be continuous or consequently single, for activity becomes multiple when interrupted. That is why we cannot possess perfect happiness now, as Aristotle admits (S.T. I-II, 3, 2 ad 4).

Attainment of the condition of beatitude conceived by Boethius with its plurality of goods is for Thomas a result of the beatific vision in heaven in which "by a single, uninterrupted, and continuous act our minds will be united with God" (S.T. I-II, 3, 2 ad 4).

But in those conditions the decisive consideration is that persons will be united to God, who is, according to Thomas's theory of the divine attributes, universal good. Thus when Thomas considers the question of whether external goods are necessary for happiness, he grants that in this life we need them as instruments for carrying on the life of contemplation and of virtuous activity, agreeing in this with Aristotle, even while denying that they are in any way necessary for the perfect happiness of seeing God. When he confronts an objection, based on the Boethian definition, that external goods must be included in the accumulation of all goods that is beatitude, he replies in the following terms:

> The temporal possessions serving our animal life do not belong to the life of the spirit in which perfect happiness is found. Nevertheless all these benefits will be gathered there, for whatever good they manifest in the high fount whence all and each of them flow (S.T. I-II, 4, 7 ad 2).

In the conditions of heaven, God serves both as unique end and the source of different goods, desires for which are satisfied by attainment of him. God is both dominant and inclusive end, since whatever good is lost in order to attain him is somehow regained in him as universal good. In Thomas's theory, then, the distinction between inclusive and dominant ends is ultimately overcome in the beatific vision.

But in relation to human choices made in the circumstances of this life, God serves as a dominant end whose inclusion of other goods is not experienced but has to be inferred or taken on faith. Thomas also needs God as a dominant end in order to provide a more specific direction to human activity than could be done by the notion of good in general. But Thomas's conception of the human will as an appetite directed to universal good requires a conception of the end that includes all goods, since the absence of any would infringe on the happiness of the person, which requires complete satisfaction of the will. The way in which Thomas combines these two conceptions of the end is clearly present in the following passage in which he argues that human beatitude consists in God:

> The object of the will, that is the human appetite, is the Good without reserve, (bonum universale) just as the object of the mind is the True without reserve. Clearly, then, nothing can satisfy man's will except such goodness, which is found, not in anything created but in God alone. Everything created is a derivative good. He alone . . . can satisfy our will, and therefore in him alone our happiness lies (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c).

Here Thomas in effect argues on the basis of God's inclusion of other goods that he is our dominant end. It would, of course, be rational to choose a good that includes other specific goods rather than a single dominant good.

Here we come up against that is fundamentally the same issue that made it impossible for us to determine whether or not Thomas was an egoist; for in his account of the matter, in choosing the dominant good over a lesser good, the human agent does not permanently lose the lesser good; rather it comes back to him when he attains the dominant end. The crucial thing, then, is actually to attain the dominant end; for then the balancing of interests and the task of planning to satisfy plural and divergent desires become irrelevant. As a result, Thomas generally uses a dominant conception of the end for human activity and does not make use of such notions as a rational plan of life, which would involve the agent in choosing and harmonizing ultimate ends. Hardie says of the pursuit of happiness taken as an inclusive end: "The desire for happiness, so understood, is the desire for orderly and harmonious gratification of desires."[9] Thomas would not disagree with this so much as he would insist that the way to achieve the orderly and harmonious gratification of desires is through achieving the dominant end. Putting the matter thus boldly would bring back the problem of egoism, for it seems that the dominant end is then to be treated as a means to the satisfaction of the agent's desires. But the fundamental issue here is how the agent is to conceive the object which is the last end, not how he is motivated to attain it.

If we turn back for a moment to the contrast that he draws between the Boethian and Aristotelian conceptions of happiness, we see that Thomas grants that Boethius captures the general notion of beatitude (communem beatitudinis rationem) with his inclusive notion while Aristotle captures the essence of happiness (ipsam essentiam beatitudinis) with his view that happiness simply is contemplative activity. This contrast runs parallel to the distinction that Thomas draws a bit earlier when he says that "we can speak of the ultimate end, in two senses, namely to signify first what it means (secundum rationem ultimi finis), and second that in which it is realized (id in quo finis ultimi ratio invenitur) (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c). The Boethian concept of beatitude gives an inclusive notion of the final end which holds good for all human persons, for in Thomas's view "all desire their complete fulfillment" (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c). The Aristotelian concept, when complemented by Thomas's view that God is to be the primary object of contemplative activity, picks out the single end which actually meets the requirements of the Boethian concept and which is at the same time universally normative. So the contrast between inclusive and dominant notions of the end is fundamentally for Thomas a contrast between a concept and its instantiation, not a contrast between two notions with different normative and practical consequences. In Thomas's view, actions that lead to God as one's dominant ultimate end will be the same as actions that lead to the inclusive end of the complete satisfaction of one's desires.

The fact, however, that happiness is to be realized fully only under conditions very different from those of this life raises the large problem of how the end, whether conceived in inclusive or in dominant terms is to influence specific choices in this life. This problem will have to be considered when we examine the bearing of Thomas's account of the last end on his notions of moral law and moral virtue.

Perfect and Imperfect Beatitude

But first we must look briefly at Thomas's notion of imperfect beatitude, which is attainable in this life. The fundamental relations between imperfect and perfect beatitude are relations of similarity and participation. Thomas does not discuss imperfect beatitude as a separate topic, but treats it incidentally to his discussion of perfect beatitude which it resembles. Thomas observes:

> . . . There are two stages in happiness, complete and incomplete. In the first the true meaning of happiness in the fullest sense is realized, in the second happiness is shared in by some particular likeness (S.T. I-II, 3, 6c).

Beatitude tout simple for Thomas is the perfect happiness of the blessed who see God; the happiness of this life is always referred to with some qualifying addition. Imperfect beatitude always bears a fundamental resemblance to perfect beatitude in that it is activity of the intellect. Thomas says of imperfect beatitude that it is "primarily and chiefly centered on contemplation, secondarily on the activity of the practical intelligence governing our deeds and feelings, as stated in the Ethics" (S.T. I-II, 3, 5c).

There are for Thomas degrees of resemblance to perfect beatitude, which, as we have seen, consists in contemplative activity with God as its object. This we are, under the conditions of our present life, unable to carry on in a continuous fashion; but we can organize our lives in such a way that we approximate more closely to this ideal condition. In an important passage that supposes that contemplative activity can serve as the dominant end for the organization of our lives, Thomas writes of beatitude:

> All the same we can already have some share in it, and so much the greater as our activity grows more simple-minded and less distracted. Hence the active life, which is occupied with many things, has less of the nature of happiness than the contemplative life, which revolves around one thing, the gazing at truth. And if at times a man is not actually so engaged, nevertheless because he is ever open and ready, and since he turns even his very ceasing, because of sleep or natural business, to its service, his contemplation seems, as it were, to be continuous (S.T. I-II, 3, 2 ad 4).

Here contemplation serves both as ideal conditions to be approximated and as goal to which other activities are preparatory and indirectly instrumental. It is characteristic of Thomas's language in this regard that he speaks mainly of the "contemplative life" and the "active life," that is, ways of life organized toward a goal rather than separate activities that might be elements in a larger design. Thus he says:

> The active and contemplative lives differ on the basis of the different activities of men intent on different goals. One of these is the consideration of truth, which is the end of the contemplative life, and the other is internal activity, to which the active life is directed (S.T. II-II, 181, 2c).

The plurality of activities that Thomas recognized in the contemplative life is an ordered plurality, a plurality directed to the dominant end of contemplating truth (S.T. II-II, 180, 3c).

On the other hand, since it is a way of life that Thomas has

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in mind, a way of life that is to be lived by human beings with all their attendant needs and obligations, it should not be presumed that Thomas means to commend a plan of life which maximizes a single value or type of experience, such as moments of contemplation, or which derives all values or obligations from a single goal. The requirements of moral virtue and of moral law may continue to hold good even when they cut across the progress of the contemplative life, but Thomas fails to consider this possibility explicitly and to explore its consequences for his account of the goal of human action. Thomas himself speaks of the disposing and instrumental function of the moral virtues in relation to the contemplative life (S.T. II-II, 180, 3c); but he also admits that the active life, which is concerned with external activity, is a hindrance to the contemplative life "because it is impossible for anyone to be involved in external works and at the same time give himself to divine contemplation" (S.T. II-II, 182, 3c). In his approach to the questions of the interrelations and possible conflicts between the active and contemplative life, Thomas stresses the general conformity of the two ways of life and the contribution that the moral virtues make to the contemplative since they "restrain the vehemence of the passions and quell disturbances from external distractions" (S.T. II-II, 180, 2c). Such an affirmation of general harmony does not clarify those cases in which moral obligations are in prima facie conflict with the development of the contemplative life on its own lines. Thomas fails to address this problem in this section of the Summa (S.T. II-II, 179-182), because he approaches the interrelation of the two ways of life as a problem of psychological order for the individual and because he does not speak of the active life as dealing with the needs and claims of other persons and the obligations that arise from these needs and claims. The obstacles to the contemplative way of life as Thomas treats the matter are disorder in the desires of the individual person, the undue predominance of the sensitive appetite, and failures of attention. But conceiving the problem in these terms leaves out the possibility of conflicts between justified demands of the active life or the moral life and the process of contemplation. It is also easier to maintain the harmony of two different ways of life on the level of virtues or dispositions to act well than on the level of individual actions which are to be done in particular circumstances and which sometimes involve conflicts of value that are irreconcilable in the short run. There is nothing in Thomas's doctrine on imperfect beatitude to require him to deny that such conflicts can take place; but there is no sign that he takes them seriously either as problems to be resolved or as significant indications of the restraints that are characteristic of human choices and of the limits confronting human teleological activity.

The limitations that Thomas sees to contemplative activity and to beatitude in this life are primarily those that arise from the bodily condition of human persons and from the possibility that sense appetite, which is itself a consequence of the bodily condition of human persons, may come to predominate over intellectual appetite. Most of Thomas's doctrine on contemplative activity and beatitude is consistent with a dualistic and individualistic conception of the human person. Thus the body is needed for imperfect beatitude in this life, since the human mind in this life depends on a bodily organ for its activity; but the body is not needed in the perfect happiness which is found in the vision of God's essence, which does not involve bodily images (S.T. I-II, 4, 5c). Thomas goes on to observe that "happiness is the perfection of soul on the part of the mind which transcends the organs of body; it is not the perfection of soul precisely as the natural form of the body" (S.T. I-II, 4, 5 ad 1). It should, however, be pointed out that Thomas does hold that the soul's reunion with the body after the general resurrection does give the human person a new manner of possessing the good and so increases his happiness (S.T. I-II, 4, 5 ad 5). Furthermore, imperfect happiness requires health of body (bona dispositio corporis), the lack of which hinders the activity of virtue (S.T. I-II, 4, 6c). It also requires external goods which are "tools to serve happiness, which lies, says Aristotle, in the activity of virtue" (S.T. I-II, 4, 7c); these are particularly necessary for the operation of the moral virtues. Imperfect happiness also requires the support of friends "in both the active and the contemplative life," though they are not necessary for the perfect happiness that is found in seeing God (S.T. I-II, 4, 8c). Now human beings are dependent for their imperfect happiness on the body and the world and so on conditions that are external to the agent and are not subject to his control. As a result, "the partial happiness we can obtain now can be lost" (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c). The loss of happiness can be the result of external changes and also of the will's degeneration from virtue to vice, which is incompatible with the virtuous activity which is the essence of happiness for Thomas. We may note in passing that Thomas here regards vice, not sin, as incompatible with happiness; it is not the individual act, but the settled habit which corrupts the will and makes happiness (understood as virtuous activity) impossible.

Perfect happiness, on the other hand, is something that cannot be lost. Thomas argues to this conclusion from the "general notion of happiness which signifies the complete and sufficient good" (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c). It is part of its completeness that we believe it to be everlasting. If this belief is mistaken, then we are suffering from error, which is an evil which implies the absence of complete good. Thomas also offers more specific arguments to show that perfect happiness will not be lost as a result of human rejection of God or of God's rejection of human persons.

While imperfect happiness can be lost both as a result of changes in external conditions and as a result of the agent's own choices, it is at least something that human persons can achieve by their natural powers, (S.T. I-II, 5, 5c), since the natural inclination to virtuous activity, which is the essence of happiness, remains present, even though lessened by original sin (S.T. I-II, 85, 1c). And so, Thomas holds that those who "are persuaded that some happiness can be found in the world now because of the reflections about us of true beatitude" are right in their thinking (S.T. I-II, 5, 3 ad 3).

What we can conclude from this review of Thomas's views on imperfect beatitude is that it consists in both contemplative and practical activity of the intellect in accordance with virtue and that it is an attainable goal, to which the choices of the individual agent are to be directed in a way that is specific, in contrast to the agent's general pursuit of good, which is necessarily present in all of his choices according to the psychological thesis. But the attainment of imperfect beatitude requires that human persons have other goods which do not enter into the essence of perfect happiness or into the essence of that participation of it which is imperfect happiness. So the pursuit of happiness in this life, which Thomas thinks that is common to all human agents (S.T. I-II, 5, 8c), is not a matter of maximizing a single dominant end without regard to other considerations. Thomas is not committed to rejecting the claim that Hardie puts forward against dominant end theories: ". . . the life which is best for a man cannot lie in gaining only one of his objects at the cost of losing all the rest."[10] This conclusion, in fact, is what we should expect from Thomas's own general view of the human agent as a being with a plurality of appetites and a corresponding plurality of goods.

In an interesting passage on the traditional scheme of the seven capital or deadly sins, Thomas sketches the plurality of goods in two different ways:

> The good for man is of three kinds. The first is a good of the soul, requiring reason's apprehension of its attractiveness. The excellence conferred by praise or honour is such a good and vainglory inordinately pursues it. Another is the good of the

> body and pertains either to self-preservation, as food and drink, and gluttony pursues these to excess; or the preservation of the race, for instance, sexual intercourse, the objective of lust. Thirdly, there is an external good, namely riches, and this is the goal of avarice. These same four vices also imply the unregulated avoidance of contrary evils.
>
> The enumeration of these four also can be otherwise explained. Good influences appetite because it shares some property of the happiness all men connaturally (naturaliter) desire. Of these, the first is completeness, since happiness is the complete good. Excellence or renown promise such perfection; they are the concern of pride or vainglory. Happiness also includes self-sufficiency; this is the allurement of the riches that avarice seeks. A third condition essential to happiness, according to Aristotle, is pleasure, the motivation of gluttony and lust (S.T. I-II, 84, 4c).

The context is responsible for the negative character of Thomas's references to the diverse goods that are mentioned here, since Thomas is considering our desires for them precisely in so far as they are disordered and are sources of sin in the lives of human agents. But Thomas does not mean to deny that these things really are goods. So also when Thomas considers the question of what the object of beatitude is and argues that it is not an external good (riches, honor, fame, power) or a bodily good (pleasure) or even a good condition of soul, he does not deny that such things really are goods but rather insists that they are not ultimate or that they are somehow secondary to or dependent on the ultimate good. But what is important for our purposes in the passage under consideration is that Thomas here explicitly affirms the plurality of kinds of goods and implicitly points out the need for human pursuit of these goods to be regulated and ordered. These are considerations that are compatible with organizing one's life either toward a dominant end or toward a plurality of ends that are related in an inclusive plan.

What is particularly interesting in the second enumeration of goods is that it suggests that different lesser goods share in different ways in the properties of happiness and are accordingly sought for different reasons. Pursuit of these different types of goods can then be interpreted not as the pursuit of alternatives to the dominant end or the true object of beatitude which would be incompatible with it , irrelevant to it, or at best instrumental to it, but rather as the pursuit of approximations to and partial realizations of the ultimate good, which is the object of perfect beatitude. Since different goods resemble the ultimate good in different ways and correspond to human desires and appetites in different ways, it should not be presumed that they are commensurate with or reducible to or substitutable for one another, even though, as we have seen, Thomas believes that they can be ranked in some objective order. Thomas here attributes to at least some of the principal goods that human beings pursue different shares in the properties of the ultimate end, and so there is some possibility that these goods, which, it can reasonably be argued on Thomas's premises, must be distinct and irreducible because of the distinct and irreducible appetites they correspond to, can be regarded as distinct and irreducible ends of human activity which are to be integrated into a harmonious plan of life which includes a variety of distinct ends. But this is simply a possibility that is present within this text, and it does not represent the main lines on which Thomas proceeds in his teleological account of human activity.

A somewhat different possibility is present in another important text in which Thomas discusses the variety of goods pursued by human beings. This is the passage in S.T. I-II, 94, 2c, in which he considers whether natural law contains many precepts or only one. Thomas lays down the principles that "the order in which commands of the law of nature are ranged corresponds to that of our natural tendencies" and that "reason of its nature apprehends the things towards which man has a natural tendency as good objectives and therefore to be actively pursued." He then distinguishes three levels of natural inclinations: those which are common to all substances, those which are common to all animals, and those which are distinctively human and rational. Thomas regards the goods to which these natural inclinations are directed as falling within the scope of the first precept of natural law that "good is to be sought and done, evil to be avoided." The possibility that this article of the Summa suggests is that human beings pursue the plurality of goods that correspond to the plurality of their natural inclinations subject to the constraints of the appropriate precepts of natural law. This would amount to the endorsement of a pluralism of ends, which might or might not be integrated into an inclusive or second-order end but which would all be included in the notion of good in general; the pursuit of these ends would be regulated by the appropriate precepts of the natural law, which would serve as the criterion of whether the pursuit of a particular end was ordinate or inordinate, lawful or excessive. The precepts of natural law might or might not be teleological in their ultimate character, but there can be little doubt that precepts proposed by Thomas in this section of the Summa and elsewhere, of which Thomas provides the following sketchy indication, "that a man should shun ignorance, not offend others with whom he ought to live in civility and other such related requirements," function as moral constraints on the pursuit of particular ends by individuals. We may note in passing that Thomas holds that the Ten Commandments are also precepts of the natural law (S.T. I-II, 100, 3c).

With these points in mind, it might be argued that Thomas conceives human practical life as involving the pursuit of a number of different ends regulated both by an inclusive plan for happiness and by the precepts of natural law. If the suggestions made about the text on the capital sins were added to this, then the specific ends being pursued would not be regarded as discrete and competitive but as partial approximations to an ultimate end not fully attainable in this life. With or without this addition, there would be in Thomas's thought an alternative to the direction of all lesser goods to a unique ultimate end. This would be one way of avoiding the fanaticism and rigidity that Hardie and Rawls find objectionable in dominant end theories. What it comes close to in effect is taking the Boethian definition of happiness as "a state made complete by all good things being gathered together," trimming this down to fit the unsatisfactory conditions of the present life, and then proposing that this inclusive notion of the end is the imperfect happiness that is to be aimed at in this present life.

At one point, Thomas comes close to such a position when he is handling an objection to his claim that there is one ultimate end for each person. The objection is drawn from a passage of Augustine's De Civitate Dei, in which he is reporting the views of Varro on the supreme good aimed at by human activity and on the goods that human beings naturally seek. According to Varro, these are pleasure, tranquillity, the primary objects of nature, and virtue; and he explicitly proposes the possibility that these ends or goods may be sought conjunctively. In replying to this objection, Thomas simply acknowledges the possibility of this conjunctive or inclusive way of understanding the final end of human activity and speaks of "those who include various objects in their final end and take them as collectively comprising the ideal of one perfect good" (S.T. I-II, 1, 4 ad 1). He neither accepts nor denies such a conception of the final end.

In his treatment of the next objection he lays down a principle that can be used either in support or in criticism of such an inclusive conception:

> Although several particular things can be embraced together so long as there is no opposition between them, nevertheless that anything required for a thing's perfection should lie outside its perfect good is out of the question (S.T. I-II, 1, 5 ad 2).

Thomas here begins by allowing a plurality of non-opposed or compatible final goods, and the door then seems to be open for an inclusive conception of the final end. But the second half of the reply in effect says:

(1) X is (or is included in) Y's perfect good if and only if X is required for Y's perfection.

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From this one can conclude (2) and (3) as follows:

(2) If X is not (or is not included in) Y's perfect good, then X is not required for a thing's perfection.

(3) If X is required for Y's perfection, then X is (or is included in) Y's perfect good.

(1) is plausible enough and need not detain us, but the conclusions drawn from it point in opposite directions. For if one has a unitary notion of what constitutes a thing's perfect good, then one will employ (2) in such a way as to restrict what is required for a thing's perfection. This is consistent with the way in which Thomas argues in the body of this article, for he says: "The ultimate end ought so to fulfill a man's whole desire that nothing is left for him to desire" (S.T. I-II, 1, 5c). He offers a second argument drawn from the unifying character of natural principles, to show that "that to which the will tends as to its ultimate end has to be one" (S.T. I-II, 1, 5c). Alternatively, if one works from an independent understanding of what goods are necessary for a thing's perfection, one can then employ (3) in support of a non-unitary, inclusive conception of the thing's perfect good. Such a line, although Thomas himself explicitly takes it only at one place, would be especially appropriate for the pursuit of happiness under the conditions of this life, where, as we have already seen, Thomas acknowledges the need that human persons have for a variety of internal conditions (health), external things, and social relationships in order to attain imperfect happiness and where no one thing or experience meets Thomas's condition of so fulfilling "a man's whole desire that nothing is left for him to desire."

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In discussing perfect beatitude, however, Thomas does seem to rely on a consideration like (2), for instance, when he argues that such beatitude does not require or include external goods (S.T. I-II, 4, 7c). When he argues against the Boethian conception of happiness, he effectively relies on (2) with regard to perfect beatitude and on (3) with regard to imperfect beatitude. For he says:

> Perfect beatitude, such as the angels have, gathers all goods together because it is union with the universal fount of all good, not that it requires each and every individual good. Our present partial happiness requires good things enough to ensure the most developed activity this life allows (S.T. I-II, 3, 3 ad 2).

Thus we find that Thomas affirms a dominant conception of the end when he is thinking of the vision of God's essence, which he holds to be completely satisfying and so to meet the strong conditions he lays down for an ultimate end; but here he also moves toward an inclusive conception of the end in dealing with the pursuit of beatitude in this life where no such completely satisfying object is available. But he does not really commit himself to such a view.

Thomas remains subject to a strong tendency to treat lesser goods than contemplative activity in mainly instrumental terms. In fact, an instrumental view of lesser goods is quite compatible with the text just considered. Because of his acceptance of Aristotle's dictum that choice is of the means, Thomas requires that any good or end that can be chosen be regarded as a means, at least in the choice, and so not as an ultimate end. Thomas is willing to make this expliwith regard to the virtues: "Happiness is the ultimate end of all the virtues, and their proper ends are subordinate to that, which is why they fall into our field of choice (S.T. I-II, 13, 3 ad 1).

This same tendency is operative in his thought when he considers the view that certain activities such as games and scientific work are carried on for themselves. As we mentioned earlier, when Thomas argues the case for positing an ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 1, 4), he employs a weak notion of ultimate end taken from Aristotle's argument in Nicomachean Ethics I.2 according to which all that is necessary for something to count as an ultimate end is that it be pursued for itself and not for the sake of some further good. But Thomas wants to maintain as well that there is only ultimate end for each individual human person (S.T. I-II, 1, 5) and that everything that the person wills he wills on account of for (propter) the ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 1, 6). We have already criticized Thomas's argument for the second of these positions on the ground that it confuses the choice of a good that participates in a supreme good with the choice of means to an end. But the two positions, when taken together require that every individual direct all his acts of willing to a single ultimate end and so seem to impose tight teleological unity on the pattern of his or her life. As a consequence, Thomas feels impelled to regard activities that are not directed to ends beyond themselves and so are ultimate ends in the weaker sense as directed to the good of the agent. Thus he says: "Games are not meant to serve any purpose outside themselves; all the same they are salutary to the player, by delighting him and affording relaxation. And his complete good is his ultimate end" (*S.T.* I-II, 1, 6 *ad* 1). He makes the same move with regard to speculative knowledge: "Even the disinterested knowledge of theoretic science is loved as good for the one who pursues it; moreover it is caught up in the complete and perfect good which is his last end" *S.T.* I-II, 1, 6 *ad* 2).

This way of preserving the subordination and direction of specific activities to the ultimate end involves a conception of the last end as being the good of the agent himself and brings back the problem of egoism. It is not completely clear whether in taking this line with regard to games and theoretical knowledge, Thomas means to account for apparent counter-examples to his claim that everything a man desires is on account of an ultimate end or whether he also means to offer guidance for our use of games and theoretical knowledge. The context and Thomas's use of indicative verbs supports the first view. The line that Thomas takes here has the value of reminding us of the contribution that activities aimed at the general well-being of the agent make to the attainment of the agent's ends. Consideration of what is needed for the general well-being of the agent avoids the imbalance and rigidity that can be present in the pursuit of a well-defined dominant end; but it complicates the strategy for choice since we can readily imagine situations in which the means most conducive to the attainment of the end requires some sacrifice of well-being, e.g., health, rest, tranquillity. But Thomas's strategy has the disadvantage of imposing a unity on the agent's activity that is more apparent than real. For the notion of the agent's complete good, when this is not filled in by his choice of kinds of goods or particular goods to be aimed at, is too indefinite to serve as a dominant end and to be normative for particular actions that are to be means to that end. More fundamentally, when the agent is said to desire specific goods such as theoretical knowledge which are included in the complete and perfect good, we are no longer dealing with the choice of means to the end of imperfect beatitude, which is to be attained in this life, but with the relation of goods in this life to the perfect good which is attained in perfect beatitude. The teleological unity that Thomas finds in human life does not arise here from the dominant end of contemplative activity in this life, but from the dominant end of perfect beatitude to be attained hereafter. But the article under consideration here does show the importance that he attaches to subordinating and directing specific activities to an ultimate end.

In summary, then, we would argue that Thomas holds a dominant-end view with regard to the next life, though the end to be attained is itself inclusive of all other goods. With regard to this life, he generally, though not always, adopts a dominant-end view, even though he acknowledges the plurality of human desires and goods within the individual agent. But his use of the notion of dominant end is sufficiently indefinite that it is doubtful whether he is really looking for what the dominant end theorist is said to want: "a method of choice which the agent himself can always follow in order to make a rational decision."[12] For the ultimate end that Thomas is really interested in lies beyond the limits of this life, and its relevance to deliberations and principles of action within this life presents special problems, as we shall see.

Is the Ultimate End Desired by All?

We must, however, now turn to the second of three questions that were raised earlier, namely, can Thomas show that the last end as he conceives it is in fact desired and intended by all human persons? This seems to be an unpromising project on its face, for the ideal of contemplative activity that Thomas took over from Aristotle seems to be a notion of happiness capable of appealing only to an elite, and the claim that it is the universal final end seems to go against nearly all of what we know about human desires in the conditions of this life. Thus Hardie comments with regard to Aristotle's dicta on contemplation in the Nicomachean Ethics:

> The concept of felicity which they convey must have seemed narrow in its scope even to Aristotle's contemporaries and pupils. It is implied that a man is in the fullest sense happy only when he is meditating, in an experience coloured perhaps by religious emotions, on theological and astronomical propositions and their proofs.[13]

D. J. O'Connor applies this line of criticism to Aquinas and urges that his according the central place in happiness to contemplative activity, "a form of diversion which is in fact enjoyed by a very small proportion of the human race," shows the "extent to which his concept of human well-being is removed from the mundane hopes and fears of ordinary men."[14] The effort of Thomas to propose one ultimate end for the activity of all persons seems to be based on willful ignorance of the diversity of human tastes and to

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reflect an arbitrary preference for one way of life and its values over another. Thomas's project seems to limit "the free development of individuality" which J. S. Mill regarded as "one of the leading essentials of well-being."[15] It goes against the following thesis advanced by Robert Nozick, which probably enjoys wide support in modern liberal societies:

> For each person, so far as objective criteria of goodness can tell (in so far as they exist) there is a wide range of very different kinds of life that tie as best; no other is objectively better for him than anyone in this range, and no one within the range is objectively better than any other.[16]

In short, it seems that Thomas's project or arguing for one ultimate end is false as an account of actual human desires and undesirable as a goal.

Perhaps the most enlightening way to present Thomas's thought on this matter is by way of contrast with the approach adopted by one of his recent critics, who questions the method by which he reaches his conclusions. O'Connor argues:

> Now it is natural enough that a religious mystic, as St. Thomas was, should find in his mystical experiences the model of human satisfactions. But we tend to suppose that arguments about human nature and human happiness will bear some relation to these concepts as they occur in our everyday thinking. And it is a remarkable feature about the arguments by which he tries to establish the nature of the final end of man that they make little appeal to empirical fact, although they are designed to show what human happiness consists in and how it is to be achieved. To us, it seems natural to suppose that questions about human nature and its satisfactions are to be settled by observation of how people behave and, in particular, by the trained and controlled observations of psychologists and social scientists. And indeed such observations confirm what common experience suggests, namely, that the goals and activities in which people find happiness are

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> many and various, and that they depend upon our tastes, abilities, temperaments, education, social ambience, and so on -- in brief, upon heredity and environment. But St. Thomas would not be interested in this sort of evidence. It does not relate to the final end of man.[17]

This sort of criticism of Thomas, with its strong overtones of naturalism and determinism and its insistence on an empirical method for handling questions about human happiness, is likely to strike most readers as sensible and realistic; but it also serves as a good example of misrepresenting what Thomas is about. (It is not clear whether O'Connor means simply to indicate the great difference that there is between medieval and contemporary ways of answering the question of what makes for human happiness or whether he also wants to suggest that Thomas is fundamentally mistaken in both his method and his conclusions. The absence of any careful presentation of Thomas's arguments on human happiness suggests that this second possibility is O'Connor's intention.) In one sense O'Connor is quite right in saying that Thomas is not interested in assessing empirical evidence, but what this point shows is that Thomas is really asking a question that is different from the one that O'Connor has in mind. When Thomas asks what constitutes human happiness, which is the topic of Question 2 of the Prima Secundae, he is not taking for granted the limitations on human satisfaction that are inescapable in this present life and then asking what things do in fact make people happy. It is doubtful whether the question as conceived in this way can be answered by O'Connor's naturalistic methods, since one must still reckon with such questions as whether it is correct to consider a person happy merely because he is satisfied and whether there is a place for the rational criticism of desires and their satisfaction in relation to their long-term effects and for the possibility of educating persons to prefer certain kinds of goods.

Thomas for his part takes the possibility of perfect beatitude seriously and then raises the question of what kind of object might be such that the attainment of it would be perfectly satisfying. This is, of course, a speculative question that deals not with increasing the satisfactions that people find in their current experiences, but with the possibility of an ultimate limit of felicific experience. Thomas takes the possibility of perfect beatitude seriously both for religious reasons and because of his way of thinking about human desire even under the conditions of this life. This is apparent when he argues that there is one ultimate end for all human beings. Thomas observes:

> We can speak of the ultimate end in two senses, namely to signify first what it means, and second, that in which it is realized. As far as the first, all are at one here, because all desire their complete fulfillment, which, as we have noted, is what final end means. As for the second, however, all are not unanimous, for some want riches, others a life of pleasure, others something else (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c).

Here we find that Thomas is using the strong notion of ultimate end as that which is able "so to fulfill a man's whole desire that nothing is left beside for him to desire" (S.T. I-II, 1, 5c). Aquinas, like Hobbes, has a notion of desire as progressive and insatiable in this life; and unlike those Eastern traditions which see human liberation as involving the negation of desire,[18] Aquinas sees beatitude as the fulfillment and satisfaction of desire.

We have seen that Thomas thinks that the desire for complete satisfaction is characteristic of the human will as such, and that the human will has a necessary and natural inclination to this complete satisfaction and to whatever is seen as providing it and to whatever is seen as necessarily connected to that (see S.T. I, 82, 2c). He does not claim that the presence of such an inclination in human persons entails its actual fulfillment; such a claim would be incompatible with his acceptance of the doctrine of eternal punishment. Nor does he even claim that the existence of such an inclination entails the possibility of its fulfillment, though he would regard the existence of a permanently unsatisfied natural inclination as something anomalous. But his belief in the presence of such an inclination in human persons makes it reasonable and appropriate for Thomas to consider seriously the possibility of its fulfillment. Since Thomas takes the inclination to be fundamental to the entire active life of the human agent, the question whether or not there is an object to satisfy this inclination is of fundamental importance for the intelligent direction of human life. Now this inclination has to be characteristic of the will taken as the faculty of choice for the entire person and not simply as appetite of the intellect, since what is sought is an object capable of satisfying the appetites and desires of the person taken all together; for as we have just seen, the ultimate end is "so to fulfill a man's whole desire that nothing is left beside for him to desire" (S.T. I-II, 1, 5c).

Even though it is the activity of the theoretical intellect contemplating God's essence that Thomas believes constitutes our ultimate and perfect beatitude (S.T. I-II, 3, 8c), and though he is willing to use the Aristotelian argument that happiness must be "a man's best activity, that is to say when his highest power is engaged with its highest object" (S.T. I-II, 3, 5c), we should not conclude that he handles the whole question of the last end simply by affirming and extending his personal preference for certain kinds of activity, as O'Connor insinuates, or that he is simply ratifying an Aristotelian evaluative ranking of faculties and their objects. Since he begins his inquiry into the ultimate end with the human desire for complete satisfaction of appetite, we must bear two things in mind: first, that in Thomas's view this desire or inclination is present in all human beings and is logically prior to, neither dependent on nor incompatible with, their inherited or acquired preferences for one sort of activity over another; second, that this way of conceiving the object of beatitude commits Thomas to showing that the object of beatitude is capable of satisfying all the appetites of the human person and is not simply an object capable of being seen by the intellect and so of satisfying the will understood simply as the appetite of the intellect for the good appropriate to it.

Once the character of Thomas's starting point is appreciated, we can see how irrelevant most of O'Connor's naturalistic criticism of his procedure is. Thus the fact that human beings pursue different goals and live in different ways does not threaten Thomas's claim that they all seek the ultimate end of complete satisfaction of their desires; for this arises not from a rejection of the search for complete fulfillment, but from disagreement as to the object which, when attained, effects the complete happiness of the agent. So Thomas serenely says in reply to an objection, "Different views of how life should be lived arise from the various objects in which the idea of complete good is sought" (S.T. I-II, 1, 7 ad 2). It is not the case that Thomas holds or is somehow committed to the view that all human beings aim at the same definite end, which is the contemplation of God. Rather, it is Thomas's view that like Shakespeare's Cleopatra, all persons have "immortal longings" within them,[19] which may or may not be explicit, which may or may not manifest themselves in theistic belief or religious commitment.

Alternative Objects of Beatitude

We should, however, recognize an aspect of the dispute about the ultimate end that Thomas himself does not make explicit: that is, that the dispute may not be understood in the same terms by all participants; for some may be putting forward the claims of riches or pleasure or power to be the ultimate end of human life without believing that an ultimate end in Thomas's sense is attainable. They may be advancing claims that these goods are ultimate in the weaker sense of not being pursued for the sake of something beyond themselves and that these goods are to be ranked ahead of various other goods.

The dispute about what object is or can be the ultimate end

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of human appetite is reviewed by Thomas in Question 2. Contrary to what O'Connor suggests, he relies neither on a sophisticated appeal to cultivated taste nor on an intuition of human nature.[20] It is true that Thomas in the article in which he argues that there is one final end for all men does offer an analogy between differences of taste and differences in the ultimate end that is being pursued, on which he comments: "Likewise we ought to account that good the most complete which is finally sought by those with well-tempered affections" (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c). But the point of the analogy is not to argue from the preference of those with well-tempered affections for a certain good to the claim that this good is therefore the final end, but rather to point out that disagreement about what the ultimate end is does not show that there is not one ultimate end. It is the function of the arguments that Thomas offers in Question 2 to show that various goods that are proposed as the ultimate end cannot be the ultimate end and the object of beatitude. It is only in Question 3 that Thomas gets to the question of what faculties and activities of the human subject are involved in beatitude, and this should make it evident that in Question 2 Thomas does not base his argument on the evaluative primacy of the theoretical intellect and its objects.

Thomas, proceeding along the lines laid down by Aristotle in Nicomachean Ethics I, 5, first considers claims that various external goods are the object of beatitude. Since riches are sought for the support of human life, they fall short of even the weaker sense of ultimate end, that is, a good sought for itself (S.T. I-II, 2, 1c). Thomas acknowledges that the desire for wealth can be unlimited (infinitum), even as the desire for the supreme good is unlimited; but he contends that the supreme good satisfies desire whereas riches fail to do so and produce a craving for more (S.T. I-II, 2, 1 ad 3). Power likewise is not an ultimate end since it belongs to the source of activity and is used for ends beyond itself (S.T. I-II, 2, 4c). Honors and fame or glory are consequences of beatitude and are not essential to it (S.T. I-II, 2, 2 and 3). In conclusion, Thomas argues that these various kinds of external goods fall short of the properties of self-sufficiency and completeness that mark the ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 2, 4c). Self-sufficiency means that the end in question is not lacking in any necessary good. For Thomas completeness means that the end in question has no bad consequences. Thomas also makes the more general point that "happiness is complete well-being and incompatible with any evil." So he has no problem in affirming that the various external goods cannot be the object of beatitude or the ultimate end since they are compatible with various kinds of evils and deficiencies and can be misused. This, we can see, is fundamentally an argument to show that these goods fall short of being the ultimate end in the stronger sense.

Thomas then turns to consider goods which are internal to the human person. The body and its goods are not an ultimate end in the weaker sense according to him. "The body is for the soul, as matter for form, and instruments for a principal cause to work through. Likewise blessings (bona) of body are meant for (ordinantur) blessings of soul" (S.T. I-II, 2, 5c). Thomas thus interprets the body-soul relationship on the pattern of the means-end relationship, since it is an instance of the matter-form relationship. We should observe that even if one adopts the instrumental view of the body proposed here by Thomas, one need not accept the dictum that goods of the body are "meant for" or are instrumental to goods of the soul. This is particularly true when the dictum is taken distributively.

In this same article, Thomas proposes another argument, which attempts to show that the ultimate good of a person cannot be simply his own preservation in existence. Thomas writes:

> First, when a thing is made for something other than itself, (*ordinatur ad aliud*) then its ultimate end cannot be constituted by its own continuance in existence. . . Manifestly man is destined to an end (*homo ordinatur ad aliquid sicut ad finem*), beyond himself, for he himself is not the supreme good. And therefore the final goal for his reason and will cannot just be his own continuance (*S.T.* I-II, 2, 5c).

This line of argument, while it is not formally defective and while its universal premise that everything made for an end outside itself cannot have its continuance in existence as its end seems trivial enough, takes for granted the crucial claim that man is destined to an end beyond himself. The only reason offered for this is the claim that man himself is not the supreme good, a claim that may appear to be a harmless truism. But this is actually the key to the argument, for this claim only contributes to the argument if we see that Thomas here assumes that man is clearly directed to or "meant for" the highest good, a good that can be an ultimate end in the strong sense. But man, as Thomas sees, cannot be such an ultimate end for himself; such a view would be incompatible with Thomas's whole understanding of the notion of appetite in creatures. A humanist or a Kantian may want to affirm that a human person is an ultimate end in Thomas's weaker sense, that is, not to be used for further ends; but there seems to be no reason at all for affirming that a human person is an ultimate end in the stronger sense.

In considering the claim of pleasure to be the ultimate end, Thomas follows the Aristotelian line of treating it as a consequence or completion of the activity which is beatitude and concludes: "Not even the delight resulting from the perfect good is the decisive point of happiness, but a sort of essential property or result of it" (S.T. I-II, 2, 6c). Thomas admits, however, that pleasure is an ultimate end in the weaker sense, even though he does not use this terminology: "As good is desired on its own account, so too is pleasure desired and not on account of anything else, if the term 'on account of' spells final causality" (S.T. I-II, 2, 6 ad 1). Thus we do not need to ask what further end pleasure is directed to, but pleasure remains dependent on the possession of good: "Pleasure is the resting with (quies) an object of desire, and it is because of this that pleasure is desired" (S.T. I-II, 2, 6 ad 1).

Thomas also offers a more detailed argument to show that bodily or sensible pleasure is not the ultimate end, though he admits that such pleasures "are what a majority want" (S.T. I-II, 2, 6 ad 2). This argument is of interest both because it shows the dependence of Thomas's account of the good on his theory of knowledge and because it shows one source of the limitless character of desire in Thomas's theory. Thomas writes:

> Since the rational soul outstretches the reach of bodily

> matter, that part of it which is not bound to a corporal organ has a sort of limitlessness with respect to the body . . . Sense, which is a bodily power, perceives an individual pinned down to space and time through matter, whereas the intelligence, which is a power unenclosed by matter, perceives a universal which is lifted above matter and embraces any number of individuals. So it is clear that a good matching the body and affording bodily pleasure when sensuously experienced is not man's full good, but is trifling compared with a good for the soul (S.T. I-II, 2, 6c).

Thomas here assumes that, at least in terms of the good to be possessed, the individual adds nothing important or irreplaceable to the universal which the intellect attains, that, in effect, the individual sensible existing thing is but the husk of the inner value, the universal. As we have seen earlier, there is serious reason to doubt the adequacy of Thomas's division of goods into material and spiritual. Somewhat similar considerations apply here. In the first place, we are dealing with relations of desire and possession between existing individuals, that indeed instantiate certain universal notions and values and that may derive much or most of their goodness from this instantiation of the universal. Especially when we think of the ways in which we derive satisfactions and pleasure in our relations to other individual persons and to works of art, as well as to some of the higher animals and to certain objects in nature, we should hesitate to accept a view that puts a sharp distinction between our experience of the individual and our grasp of the universal and finds value only in the second. Also it is very doubtful that bodily pleasure as this is experienced by human beings is ever simply a matter of the reaction of one individual physical being to another in such a way that awareness of the universal is excluded; the experience of bodily pleasure is interpreted and understood by the person feeling it. Furthermore, even if one grants the greater cognitive value of knowledge of the universal over knowledge of individuals, it by no means follows that the universal is more valuable than the individual for all purposes. The importance of this is especially clear when one recalls that for Thomas the basic movement of appetite is toward things as they exist outside the agent: "The appetitive power tends as such outside itself, to a reality that is 'other' (S.T. I, 59, 3 ad 2). But, on Thomas's own view, the external things in the world to which our appetites move, are individual and not universal. So if the movement of appetite and will is to things themselves and not to conceptual representations of them, then goodness taken as the ability to satisfy desire must be found in individual things themselves. It may be a higher or better form of knowledge to understand the universal idea of cow, but such an entity gives no milk.

The other aspect of this passage that should be stressed in Thomas's view that the human mind in its noncorporeal aspect (see S.T. I, 85, 1c) is in some way infinite and that its objects are not to be identified with individual things in the world. So for Thomas, the end, if it is to be a single reality and if it is to satisfy the will conceived as the appetite of the intellect must be a universal reality. Thomas does not argue explicitly from what satisfies the will taken as the appetite of the intellect to what satisfies or is good for the will taken as the power of decision for the whole person, since he does not explicitly distinguish the two. But it seems clear that in this stage of the overall argument of Question 2 he is allowing the good that satisfies the appetite of the intellect to be determinative for and even to be identical with the good that is to satisfy the entire person.

Thomas next considers the possibility that the ultimate end to be sought by human persons is some good of the soul. Here he distinguishes two aspects of the end: "the very thing itself we want to possess and the actual reaching or holding of it" (S.T. I-II, 2, 7c). Our possession of the ultimate end, since this is the mind's vision of God's essence, is necessarily a good of the soul for Thomas. But the thing to be possessed is not the soul itself. The soul, precisely because it is a potential being, a being that is moved from potency to act, cannot be an ultimate end in the weak sense; for "potentiality is for (propter) actuality, which is its fulfillment" (S.T. I-II, 2, 7c). A quality of soul, whether this be potentiality or disposition or activity, is not an ultimate end in the strong sense because "a psychological entity is a derivative and therefore a particular good" and so falls short of the human desire "for unrestricted good" (boni universalis) (S.T. I-II, 2, 7c). This same line of argument is advanced in more explicit form in the following article in which Thomas argues that concludes that no thing created can totally satisfy human appetite. God alone, who is universal good, "can satisfy our will, and therefore in him alone our happiness lies" (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c). We should observe that Thomas does not explicitly raise the possibility that moral virtue may be the ultimate end or the object of beatitude. He would regard it as a good of the soul, to which his general arguments that the object of beatitude is not a good of the soul and is not a created good would apply. Thomas does not deny that the attainment of beatitude by the individual soul involves a good in the soul, but here he is looking for the object about which the soul is to be active.

God as the Object of Beatitude

Question 2, then, taken as a whole constitutes Thomas's argument that the object of beatitude and hence the ultimate end of human activity is God precisely as universal good. As we pointed out earlier, this argument does not proceed from Thomas's evaluative ranking of the various human faculties and their activities or from a preference for one form of activity. As a consequence, the argument is not threatened by empirical evidence about the disparate preferences of human persons. In fact, as Thomas points out, the object which is the ultimate end of human activity is such that "human and all other beings share it together, for God is the ultimate end for all things without exception" (S.T. I-II, 1, 8c). One way of seeing the place of Question 2 in Thomas's plan is to say that it aims to make conscious and explicit the movement to God that Thomas finds present in all creatures. Now this may seem to be a highly religious way of understanding human life, but we should point out that in this question Thomas conceives God in metaphysical terms as the unrestricted good, in which all lesser kinds and manifestations of goodness participate and not in the categories of personal religion and of theistic belief. Thomas's argument does not presuppose that human agents do or must understand their lives in explicitly religious terms. In fact, this might even be the basis for religious or theological objections to it, urging that it fails to require an explicitly religious orientation to a personal God who brings salvation and who is related to human persons, not as the satisfying object of appetite, but as loving and fatherly creator and ruler.

It should also be noted that Thomas's line of argument here does not establish the existence of the final end, nor does it presuppose it. In standard cases of teleological activity, the end to be attained need not exist but may nonetheless serve to guide action by its influence on the agent's intellect and will. As Thomas points out in the very beginning of this section of the *Summa*: "Though last in respect to execution, an end comes first in respect to the agent's intention: it is thus that it has the force of a cause" (*S.T.* I-II, 1, *ad* 1). The two points from which Thomas works and which we have related to the weak and strong notions of the ultimate end, are the goal-directed character of human activity (*S.T.* I-II, 1, 2c) and the insatiability of human desire (*S.T.* I-II, 1, 5c). Thomas's treatment of both of these might be correct even in the absence of a divine or non-divine reality to serve as the object of beatitude and to be the ultimate end. It would then turn out that human desire would never attain a state of complete satisfaction; this outcome, which is not incompatible with our knowledge of the experience of most persons in this life, might then be taken as a reason for recommending different strategies in life, e.g., a policy of renouncing desire or of accepting non-satisfactory aspects of the human situation.

This possibility in fact brings us up against a basic difficulty in Thomas's use of the notion of appetite. For if we think of

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will as a power of deciding among various appetites and inclinations and their respective objects, and if we believe that will should choose reasonably in the light of its knowledge of possible alternatives and their likelihood of realization (both of which are views that Thomas holds), then it would seem that the desire for unlimited good is an irrational desire and so should be checked. It should not be taken as a leading organizational principle of one's life. This is a possibility that does not preoccupy Thomas very much, since he holds on both religious and philosophical grounds that there is an object capable of satisfying limitless desire. But, in the absence of strong evidence for the existence of such an object, the escalating and infinitizing of desire that we find in Thomas's argument is considerably more problematic than would appear from his treatment of it.

In addition to questioning the rationality of Thomas's reliance on limitless desire, one can also take the notion in the opposite direction to the one followed by Thomas. Instead of regarding the insatiability and limitlessness of human desire as a manifestation of the limitlessness of the spiritual aspect of human nature, one could see it as a consequence of the temporal and material character of human beings. A human being can be temporarily sated with goods of certain classes; desire returns as a function of biological changes. Satisfactions are temporary and therefore limited; desire revives because human beings are limited and must conform to certain biological and psychological patterns. In support of this way of interpreting the continuing renewal of desire, one can point to Hobbes' recognition of the insatiability of desire along with his affirmation of materialism in philosophical psychology.

But, as Hobbes's own formulation suggests, there is an aspect of will that goes beyond the biological recurrence of desire; as Hobbes writes, "the object of man's desire is not to enjoy once only, and for one instant of time: but to assure for ever, the way of his future desire." Hobbes's account of the limitlessness of desires brings in the idea of a second-order desire that one's future desires be satisfied. This gives rise to two ways of moving beyond the ordinarily limited desire for a particular good. First, Hobbes's reference to the future opens up a potentially limitless region for desire, especially if one accepts the insistence on self-preservation as a fundamental good that is found in both Aquinas and Hobbes (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c). Second, the notion of assuring the way of future desires brings in the problem of obstacles that can stand or be interposed between a desire and its fulfillment. Assuring the way of one's desires requires control over actual and potential obstacles, which are unlimited and which often arise from other persons; and the desire for such assurance can be the source of a desire for unlimited power over other persons and of conflict with other persons who have similar desires. The second-order desire to have one's primary desires satisfied belongs to will understood as central power of decision rather than to will understood as appetite of the intellect, whereas Thomas's argument relies on a limitless primary appetite, which he aims to show is an appetite for an uncreated and unlimited good.

This reliance on the unlimited character of a primary appetite is apparent in S.T. I-II, 3, 8c, where Thomas adds to the conclusion of Question 2 that God as uncreated and universal good is the object of beatitude the further claim that the attainment of this object requires not merely that the human mind know that God exists but also that the human mind see God's essence. Thomas writes:

> Were the human mind, from knowing what the created effects about us were, to have reached the position of knowing no more about God than that he exists, then not yet would it have come to the point of perfection by knowing the first cause unreservedly, a natural desire to find it would remain. Not yet would a man be in perfect bliss. Complete happiness, requires the mind to come through to the essence of the first cause. (S.T. I-II, 3, 8c).

Since it is, as we shall see, Thomas's view that such a good would leave no primary appetites unsatisfied, it would also satisfy a second-order desire that one's desires be satisfied. This supreme good is, as we have seen, an ultimate end that is a dominant end because it is single (God) and is attained by a single form of activity (contemplation) and is at the same time an inclusive end because it includes all other, lesser goods (universal good). The supreme good can then presumably satisfy both will taken as the faculty of decision for the entire person and will taken as a primary appetite of the intellect. So Thomas's line of argument is not in any serious difficulty coming out of his failure to distinguish these two notions of will. But making this distinction explicit and then relating it to the simultaneously dominant and inclusive character of the ultimate end provides a way of making manifest the way in which in Thomas's doctrine the ultimate end can be thought to satisfy both human appetite in general and the will taken as the appetite of the intellect. Since it is conceived as both universal good and as the ultimate object of the intellect, it can satisfy both human appetite in general and the appetite of the intellect.

As we look back over Thomas's line of argument in Question 2, we can see that Thomas proceeds on the basis of certain claims about human nature and the relation of various objects of desire to human appetite and not on the basis of personal or social preferences for one sort of activity over another. This effectively exempts him from the charges of arbitrariness and elitism that have been made against Aristotle, and it keeps him within the Christian tradition, according to which salvation and beatitude are open to persons of all levels of talent and walks of life and are certainly not restricted to those with a bent for philosophical contemplation.[21] For contemplation enters into beatitude not as the object, the supreme good or ultimate end (finis qui), which is to be attained, but as the state or condition of attaining the end (adeptio finis or finis quo). This is the topic of Question 3, in which Thomas, having argued that the ultimate end in the strong sense must be universal good, specifies how it is to be attained by the human subject. Beatitude or the ultimate end in its subjective aspect is "a creaturely reality" present in the human agent (S.T. I-II, 3, 1c) and is an activity immanent to the agent (S.T. I-II, 3, 2 ad 3). In perfect beatitude, this activity is "single, uninterrupted and continuous" (S.T. I-II, 3, 2 ad 4). Because the end to be attained is universal good, the human agent cannot reach it through the senses, but only through the intellect (S.T. I-II, 3, 3c). The end is actually possessed or attained through the intellect and not through the will; Thomas observes: "Obviously the desiring an end is not the possessing it, but a moving towards it" (S.T. I-II, 3, 4c). Will or desire is satisfied by the possession of the object by the intellect and takes pleasure or delight in it, but the crucial activity is that of the intellect. Here Thomas takes issue with Augustine and with the Franciscan tradition in medieval philosophy, in which union with God in beatitude is primarily through the will and not through the intellect.[22] The fact that both Thomas and such Franciscans as Bonaventure and Duns Scotus regard God as the ultimate end should serve as further evidence that that claim does not depend on the evaluative primacy accorded to contemplative as a human activity.

Thomas then argues that the beatific activity must be in the theoretical intellect and not in the practical. As we mentioned earlier, he does not regard these as separate faculties (S.T. I, 79, 12) but follows Aristotle in maintaining that they differ in their relations to activity.

The three arguments that he offers in support of the view that beatitude is in the theoretical intellect are not very satisfactory. The first is the hierarchical argument that perfect human happiness must involve the best human activity and so must occur only "when his highest (optimae) power is engaged with its highest (optimi) object" (S.T. I-II, 3, 5c). Thomas concludes from this that happiness must consist in a human person's employing his mind to contemplate divine good; which is "an object for its seeing, not for its doing something in practice" (S.T. I-II, 3, 5c). Now there are three ways of handling this argument. One is to exhibit it as an instance of certain very general principles of value that are operative in Thomas's thought, e.g., the universal is better than the singular, the intellect is better than the senses, etc. These principles of value, most of which can be traced back to Plato and various forms of Platonism, can be regarded as axioms in a general theory of value. This would afford us another important way of linking Thomas's ontology and his account of practical and ethical life; but working this out in sufficient detail so that the resulting the--ory of value could be applied and criticized in systematic fashion would be a very large project, and would be beyond the scope of this dissertation. The second is to reject the argument as involving unfounded claims about values or as offering an implausible or inappropriate ranking of actions on the basis of faculties or as involving circular claims to the effect happiness must be an activity of the highest power and that the highest power is the one that constitutes happiness. But this would be a somewhat cavalier mode of proceeding, since it is possible that Thomas may have a coherent theory of value that can give ranking of faculties independent of beatitude and applicable to this problem. A third way of treating the argument would be to sidestep the claims about hierarchical ranking of faculties and powers and focus on the claim that divine good is the kind of thing that is to be contemplated, not made or done. If it is taken as established that the object of beatitude is divine good (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c) and that because this is universal it must be attained by the intellect (S.T. I-II, 3, 4c), then the important question is: what is the intellect to do when confronted with this object? Clearly, divine good does not need to be brought into existence or made real by human action. It is the sort of thing that is to be contemplated with satisfaction and delight. This would be enough to make Thomas's point here, without regard to the more general claims about the value of various faculties and objects, which are likely to strike twentieth-century readers as vague, arbitrary, and dualistic but which probably struck Thomas's own contemporaries as truisms. Thomas may well have wanted to show that his conclusion about the activity which attains the ultimate end was consistent with certain general axioms of value; but the argument may be simpler and more acceptable than the appeal to these axioms would suggest.

The second argument that happiness is an activity of the theoretical intellect in effect claims that practical intellect is inherently instrumental and so its activity cannot end with the ultimate end. Thomas writes:

> Contemplation above all is sought for its own sake. This is not the case with activity of the practical intellect, which is performed in order to do or make something and therefore is designed for an end. The ultimate end, then, cannot lie within the active life which is the field of the practical intelligence (S.T. I-II, 3, 5c).

Here Thomas argues that activity of the practical intellect, since it is by definition directed to an activity or end beyond itself, fails to meet the standard for something's being an ultimate end in the weak sense, namely, its being pursued for its own sake and not for an end beyond itself. The claim that contemplation is sought for its own sake is apparently to be taken as an affirmation that it is at least the kind of activity that can be an ultimate end in the weak sense; for the claim would clearly be false if it were taken as a universal statement of what people do and it would be questionable if it were proposed as a universal norm. Contemplation can and in all likelihood should be used as a means to further ends, at least under the conditions of this life. Thomas tells us that the activity of the practical intellect is directed to action and that actions are directed to an end. Now the first of these claims would show that the act of the practical intellect is not the ultimate end itself, since it is not an end in itself, but the second claim does not show that the action to which the practical intellect is directed, e.g., activity according to a moral virtue, is not an end in itself. What Thomas says here does not provide any reason for denying that at least some virtuous actions are ends in themselves; in the Latin there is merely the assertions that actions (_actiones_) are directed to some end. It would still be open to Thomas to maintain that virtuous actions cannot be the ultimate end in the strong sense of satisfying all our desires; but that would be to adopt the first line of argument as we interpreted it above.

The third argument is that in contemplation the human being shares with and grows like to higher beings, i.e., God and the angels, whereas the active life is common ground to humans and animals. Here Thomas is trying to have it both ways; for in the account of human acts in his philosophical psychology and in his treatise on virtue, he makes it clear that moral virtue requires both intellectual virtue and choice (S.T. I-II, 58, 4c and ad 1) and that intention, choice and consent are not to be attributed to non-rational animals (S.T. I-II, 12, 5c; 13, 2c; 15, 2c). Also, Thomas, in accordance with the main Biblical and Christian theological tradition wishes to attribute to God both creative activity and such moral qualities as justice and mercy (S.T. I, 21). So it is clear that Thomas elsewhere does not consistently limit the practical, the volitional, and the moral to human beings and animals; nor could he do so as a Christian theologian. What this third argument illustrates is the influence that Aristotle's denial of moral activity to the gods[23] and his account of God's life of changeless self-contemplation[24] had on Thomas and the tendency in Thomas to assimilate the distinction between contemplative and practical to the distinction between the spiritual (God, angels, and the human mind) and the material (the human body, animals, physical objects). Both human intellectual and practical activity are in Thomas's view carried on by human persons whose body and mind are joined together in one substance (S.T. I, 76, 1c); but Thomas seems more inclined to adopt sharply dualistic language when he is considering questions of value.

The effective part of Thomas's argument that the subject's activity in beatitude is intellectual and contemplative comes down to the claim that the activity must be intellectual because it is directed to a universal and it must be contemplative because its object is divine and not in need of human making or doing. In the remaining articles of Question 3, he turns back to the object side of perfect beatitude and makes it clear that he adopts what Hardie refers to as "the strict and restrictive answer to the question what is the scope of the 'contemplation' recommended in EN X."[25] For contemplation of the speculative sciences (physics and mathematics) that deal with sensible realities in this world is only "a sort of anticipation (participatio) of true and complete happiness" (S.T. I-II, 3, 6c). Even knowledge of spiritual substances or angels falls short of the grasp of essential truth which is found in the contemplation of God (S.T. I-II, 3, 7c). The appetite of the intellect requires that the first cause be known in its essence. Thomas closes the body of the last article in this question with a revealing formulation of his basic thesis in Question 3:

> Complete happiness requires the mind to come through to the essence itself of the first cause. And so it (intellectus) will have its fulfillment by union with God as its object, for we have already explained that in him alone our happiness lies (S.T. I-II, 3, 8c).

The concluding reference to the previous question serves to remind us of the independence of Thomas's claim that God as universal good is the object of our beatitude and the priority that this claim has to Thomas's account of the progress of intellect and will to ultimately fulfilling activity.

But the first part of the passage raises a problem of considerable importance, for we can see that Thomas is here speaking of the intellect attaining its perfection by seeing the essence of the first cause. Now, even if we grant Thomas's theses that the ultimate

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end in the strong sense must be universal and unlimited good, which alone can satisfy will in such a way that nothing more is or can be desired, and that this good is to be attained by the activity of the speculative intellect, there still remains the problem of how the good which perfects and fulfills the intellect and its appetite can satisfy the entire human person with his or her range of desires and appetites. This problem is particularly acute when we recall Thomas's earlier claims that sense activity cannot be a constituent of happiness (S.T. I-II, 3, 3c) and that material goods cannot be the object of beatitude (S.T. I-II, 2, 5c). Here it begins to look as if Thomas has argued that the ultimate end must be capable of satisfying all desires, has proposed an object of beatitude that is conceived so as to satisfy the appetite of the intellect, and then has left the plurality of inclinations and appetites, which he recognizes in his philosophical psychology, out of the picture when it is a matter of determining the ultimate end. The question that arises is: how is God or universal good to satisfy all desires? Without some answer to this question, it does not seem that Thomas can reasonably affirm that God is the ultimate end, given the line of argument that he has relied on. This question has to be asked against the background of Thomas's affirmation that the intellectual soul is the single form of the body (S.T. I, 76, 1c) and the theological belief in the resurrection of all human persons, which involves the reuniting of soul and body (S.T. I-II, 4, 5c). It is Thomas himself who raises the question: "Since it is natural for the soul to be united to the body, how is it credible that the perfection of the one should exclude the perfection of the other?" (S.T. I-II, 4, 6c).

Now, from the side of the object, there seems at first to be no serious problem here for Thomas, since he maintains that the object of beatitude is universal and unrestricted good. This ultimate end is, in Aristotle's words, "most desirable of all things, without being counted as one good thing among others, since if it were so counted, it would be made more desirable by the addition of even the least of goods."[26] This is language that Hardie uses to show Aristotle's awareness of happiness as an inclusive end: but it also applies to the relationship that Thomas believes to hold between divine and universal good and particular goods, which are participations in it without being additions to it. Thomas acknowledges the Platonic character of this view in the following passage which outlines his thought on the relation between the goodness which belongs to God by nature (S.T. I, 6, 3c) and the goodness present in creatures:

> The existent Good Itself and Unity Itself he believed to be the supreme God, by reference to whom all things were said to be good by participation. . . . That there exists some first thing called God, good by nature, is absolutely true. . . . One may therefore call things good and existent by reference to this first thing, existent and good by nature, inasmuch as they somehow participate and resemble it, even if distantly and deficiently, as was pointed out earlier. And in this sense all things are said to be good by divine goodness, which is the pattern, source, and goal of all goodness. Nevertheless the resemblance to divine goodness which leads us to call the thing good is inherent in the thing itself, belonging to it as a form and therefore naming it. And so there is one goodness in all things, and yet many (S.T. I, 6, 4c).

On this view of the relations between divine goodness and the goodness possessed by particular things, Thomas can maintain that in attaining the divine goodness as object of beatitude one is attaining all the goodness that there is and that any authentic good is included in this. Thus Thomas says that the good of speculative knowledge "is caught up in the complete and perfect good which is his ultimate end" (S.T. I-II, 1, 6 *ad* 2). So also with temporal goods, even though they do not belong to "the life of the spirit in which perfect happiness is found," they will be present as somehow included in the object of beatitude, since "whatever good they manifest is contained in the high fount whence all and each of them flow" (S.T. I-II, 4, 7 *ad* 2). But, as we have just seen, Thomas admits that there is a goodness inherent in created things themselves which is not simply identical with the divine goodness; if he were to deny this, Thomas would be committing himself to some form of pantheism. So the problem on the side of the object is whether the object of beatitude actually contains certain individual goods, things as they are in themselves and not simply as they participate in the universal good.

Is the Object Completely Satisfying?

The issue that brings out this problem most explicitly for Thomas is the question whether happiness calls for the companionship of friends. Thomas follows Aristotle in saying that in the circumstances of this life we certainly need friends. He goes on to say:

> "If, however, we speak of perfect happiness in our heavenly home, then companionship with other human beings is not strictly

> necessary, since a man is wholly and completely fulfilled in God. Nevertheless friends add a well-being (bene esse) to happiness (S.T. I-II, 4, 8c).

Now this suggests that there are goods that are somehow outside the goodness of God, at least in the sense that attaining to God does not entail attaining to these goods. But these goods are real goods and are somehow contributory to the fullness of happiness. This passage can be used to bring out a number of difficulties in Thomas's position. Thus, if goodness is in things and if the movement of appetite is to things in themselves, then it seems that the appetitive attainment of a completely satisfying object must involve attainment of the good in things and not simply an attainment of universal good. Or, if Thomas is right in holding that attainment of universal good satisfies desire, then it seems that either there is a class of goods (friends) that are good regardless of their relation to desire (which is presumed to be completely satisfied) or that some things commonly thought to be good (friends) are not really good, at least under the circumstances of perfect beatitude, since they do not satisfy desire or appetite. Thomas might try working out of these difficulties in various ways, but the root of the problem is that Thomas is working with a notion of perfect beatitude which is individualistic and intellectualistic and that he is attempting to graft onto this certain features of traditional Christian expectations about the kingdom of heaven. In a reply to an objection, he makes the revealing admission: "Were there but one single soul enjoying God it would be happy though without a neighbor to love" (S.T. I-II, 4, 8 ad 3).

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The first difficulty then that confronts Thomas's claim that the divine and universal good as object of beatitude completely satisfies desire is whether it includes all those things which Thomas acknowledges to be goods for which people might reasonably be thought to have legitimate desires, e.g., other human persons. The issue here is not whether God can bring it about that an isolated individual be happy in union with him alone or whether a person can be happy after realizing that his desires with regard to other persons are not going to be satisfied or whether God can bring it about that a person's desires are satisfied by a plurality of objects and so the person is made happy by the attainment of a plurality of goods, but whether it is intelligible to maintain that God alone by reason of being universal good can alone satisfy all the desires of a human agent, among which are to be reckoned desires for relations with at least some other human persons. On this point, Thomas offers contradictory indications. On the one hand, he wishes to maintain that the vision of God's essence is not merely the primary and essential constituent of beatitude, on which point all traditional Christian theologians would agree with him, but that every good, which the agent actually desires or can desire, is included in it. On the other hand, he wishes to say that union with friends and various other things somehow add to the condition of beatitude. At its metaphysical root, the problem is one of the relationship between universal good and particular goods. In Thomas's theory of the divine attributes, it is a matter of the relationship between God and the created goods that participate in his goodness.

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But even if we were to grant the correctness of Thomas's theory of universals and of his theological application of it, a problem would remain because as Thomas himself affirms human desires go out to actual (or possible) things and not merely to universal good. A person's desire to see a friend or to possess a cherished object is not satisfied by a vision of universal good; even though such a vision might be an incomparably better thing for him. But since Thomas has defined beatitude as the satisfaction of all desires, and made God as universal good the unique object of beatitude, the claims that seeing God is the best attainable experience and the principal constituent of beatitude are not enough for him. An initially plausible line of defense open to him is to maintain that desires for individual goods are extinguished as a result of the vision of universal good. This move would enable Thomas to hold that the object of beatitude satisfies all actual desires at the time, even if it does not satisfy all actual desires or kinds of desires as these occur over the course of the human agent's entire career. But Thomas admits that attainment of these lesser goods would be a welcome addition to the attainment of the vision of God and so that these goods would be both desirable and desired; so an appeal to the possibility of the extinction of desire would be merely temporary and ad hoc. Reliance on the extinction of other desires is, in effect, simply another means of reducing the human person's desires to a single appetite of the intellect. The temporary extinction of bodily desires and their return could be correlated with separation from and reunion with the body at death and at the resurrection respectively. But this would not work for desires directed to other disembodied persons.

Now in considering this possibility we are in effect turning to the difficulties that arise from the side of the human subject with his characteristic multiplicity of appetites, inclinations, and desires to threaten Thomas's claim that God as the object of beatitude can satisfy all human desires. We have already indicated some of the problems that arise in this regard under present conditions of life. Similar problems occur, given Thomas's doctrine of bodily resurrection. The situation, briefly, is that one is not dealing merely with a mind or intellect with the inclinations and desires natural and proper to it, but one is dealing with a human being with the full range of inclinations, appetites, and desires that are natural to it, though admittedly under circumstances which are unusual but which are an idealization of the present conditions of the world and human life. We should recall that the theological account of the judgment and resurrection is a part of the _Summa Theologiae_ that Thomas did not complete. But we can make some use of his account of these matters in the _Summa Contra Gentiles_, Book IV.[27] There Thomas makes the following points:

(1) The resurrection is caused by divine power alone but restores the natural condition in which the soul is united to the body (_S.C.G._ IV, 81).

(2) Human beings after the resurrection are no longer liable to death but have perpetual existence (_S.C.G._ IV, 82).

(3) In the risen life, there will be no use of food or sexual love; for "those things are taken away which serve the corruptible life" (_S.C.G._ IV, 83).

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(4) The bodies of the risen "are to be the same in species as our bodies are now" but are to "have a different disposition (S.C.G. IV, 85).

(5) The world or bodily creation "will be changed -- and suitably -- to be in harmony with the state of the men who then will be" (S.C.G. IV, 97).

Now, given this general characterization of the risen life, it is not possible to hold that bodily appetites or inclinations are extinguished or are inappropriate simply because they are bodily. One may notice a lingering distrust of certain bodily inclinations and appetites in (3), but Thomas here is following the reply of Jesus to the Sadducees: "At the resurrection men and women do not marry; they are like angels in heaven" (Matthew 22:30).

We will take these positions as establishing the outline of Thomas's views on a future state after the resurrection; and we will then consider how he deals with the problem of how, for the blessed, that is, the just and redeemed who are to enjoy perfect beatitude, God as universal good and the object of beatitude might satisfy all their appetites and desires. These desires will be on Thomas's own view, clearly multiple and heterogeneous. Thomas himself urges "Let us declare that happiness complete and entire requires the well-being of the body, both before and during its activity" (S.T. I-II, 4, 6c). Briefly, Thomas has two main ways of handling this multiplicity of desires. The first is to argue that in the future state the desires are inappropriate and so liable to extinction. So, for instance, Thomas argues that, while we need external goods for the practice of virtue and the attainment of imperfect beatitude in this life, external goods are unnecessary in the future state. He says:

> Nowise are they needed for the perfect happiness of seeing God. We need them now to support our animal bodies or to exercise the physical functions proper to our condition. Perfect happiness, however, is for a soul without a body or a soul united to a body which is no longer animal but spiritual" (S.T. I-II, 4, 7c).

On the strength of this conclusion, Thomas goes on to maintain that the passages of Scripture that seem to promise material satisfactions "are to be taken metaphorically, in accordance with its style of symbolizing spiritual by earthly realities" (S.T. I-II, 4, 7 *ad* 1). Material benef[illegible] are present only as contained in God as their source (S.T. I-II, [illegible] *ad* 2). This line of thought does not show that persons in the [illegible] life will not have desires for external goods, only that such desires are for things that are unnecessary and inappropriate. One might advance the further claim that such desires would become extinct in a rational and virtuous agent who enjoyed the cognitive advantages of the beatific vision, but Thomas does not make this point explicitly. In all likelihood, the question of which desires are liable to extinction by reason of their inappropriateness is to be answered by developing what Thomas says in connection with serving the needs of corruptible life in (3) above. Thomas's attitude to material goods here seems to be dominated by unimaginative considerations of what are in the colloquial sense a utilitarian character. The notion that material goods can be related to the life of imagination and self-expression is not seriously considered by Thomas.

The second way of handling some of these diverse desires and inclinations is what we may call the "trickle down" theory of beatitude. This consists in maintaining that certain desires in addition to the appetite of the intellect for universal good are satisfied as a result of that primary appetite's being satisfied or by an overflow of well-being from the satisfaction of the primary appetite. Thus Thomas holds that in perfect beatitude sense activity does not play a constituent role; but he goes on to say:

> . . . yet it comes into happiness as an antecedent and a consequent. In respect of the partial happiness we can enjoy in our present life, it is a preliminary, for sensation is presupposed to understanding. In respect of the perfect happiness hoped for in heaven, it is a result, for after the resurrection there will be what Augustine describes, a flowing out from the beatitude of soul into the body and the senses such as to enhance their activities (S.T. I-II, 3, 3c).

Thomas uses the same aquarian metaphor, when he draws a contrast between our present condition and the condition of perfect beatitude:

> In perfect bliss the whole man is fulfilled, his lower levels by the higher brimming over. In our present imperfect happiness, the reverse is the case; the lower rises to fill the higher (S.T. I-II, 3, 3 *ad* 3).

In the following question, he affirms that bodily well-being is both an antecedent requirement for perfect beatitude and a consequence of its attainment. Thomas says, "Bodily well-being, then, is a consequent condition, for happiness of soul overflows into body, which drinks of the fullness of soul" (S.T. I-II, 4, 6c). The psychological reality that lies behind this metaphorical language is familiar enough. When things go well, successful activity, whether physical or mental, can produce a kind of glow that enhances other kinds of activity. But Thomas has not really done anything to explain this effect, either in our experience of our activity in this life or in the circumstances of heavenly bliss. Thomas seems to suppose that in heaven the blessed will, because of the delight they experience in their intellectual vision of God as universal good, feel a certain similar glow in their sensitive activity. For Thomas, following Aristotle, regards pleasure as the accompaniment of happiness. "For it [pleasure] is caused by the repose of desire in a good that is held. What is beatitude but holding the highest good? And so it cannot exist without accompanying delight" (S.T. I-II, 4, 1c). Since he is interested in beatitude as a permanent activity directed to a definite object, Thomas puts more emphasis on the attainment of the good which is the source of pleasure and less emphasis on pleasure as a consequence of successful activity.[28] In his account of the situation of the blessed we can see that Thomas both follows the general lines of Aristotle's account of pleasure as an end present in activity and then extends this from the proper pleasure that follows on intellectual activity to the pleasures of sensitive activity and bodily well-being which he treats as consequences of beatific intellectual activity rather than as consequences of activities directed to their proper objects. As a result, the objects of sensitive activity and the goods to be attained by such activity drop out of the picture. A further confirmation that this is what is happening in Thomas's account of the future state is in the following passage about the difference between the beatitudes of the disembodied soul and the beatitude of the risen human being. Thomas writes:

> Desire in a disembodied soul is wholly at rest on the part of the object loved, for it possesses what contents it. Yet not on the part of the subject desiring, for the good is not possessed in every manner that can be wished for. Hence when the body is reassumed happiness will grow, not in depth (*intensive*) but in extent (*extensive*) (*S.T.* I-II, 4, 5 *ad* 5).

Here the object (*bonum*) remains the same for both the intellectual appetite of the disembodied soul and the sensitive and natural appetites of the risen person; and different appetites and inclinations serve as different ways of possessing or attaining the ultimate good. The problem that Thomas is working on here is the problem of how resurrection can add anything to perfect beatitude, which he thinks that the disembodied soul already has. His solution, which we have quoted, is ingenious but runs into the difficulty that God as universal good because of his spiritual and ideal nature cannot be the object of sensitive activity. Thus Thomas himself writes:

> Sensitive activity cannot be a constituent of happiness, which essentially consists, as we have shown, in man being united to the uncreated good, his ultimate end, a union which cannot be achieved by activity on the level of sense and feeling (*S.T.* I-II, 3, 3c).

Just how Thomas thought that God was to produce fulfillment of and pleasure in sensitive activity without providing appropriate material objects for this activity remains unclear. Once again we see some of the consequences of Thomas's identification of God and universal good; for it is plausible to think of sense activities and appetites attaining goods appropriate to them as participating in universal good in a new way, but it is contradictory to Thomas's own views to think that they can participate in universal good by attaining to

God. We can also see the difficulties that Thomas labors under here as the result of his individualistic and intellectual conception of perfect beatitude which takes God as the sole object of beatitude and ignores the possibility that God creates a new world of fulfillment in which the goodness of other objects of human activity need not be absorbed in his own perfection as universal good. In sum, though Thomas is certainly aware of the problem of showing how God as object of beatitude can satisfy all desires, he does not have satisfactory account of how this is possible, either from the side of the human subject or from the side of the object.

Morally Evil and Mistaken Desires

Thus far we have considered this problem mainly in terms of the different classes of appetites and inclinations as these figure in Thomas's philosophical psychology. But there are two special problems which do not turn on the heterogeneity of desires, but rather on characteristics of individual desires. These are the problems connected with morally evil desires and mistaken desires. Since Thomas regards the relation between an appetite or inclination and its customary range of objects as natural, necessary, and divinely established, the problem of evil desires does not arise from the fact that desires and appetites are divided into classes by their origin. Evil and error mark individual desires and choices, not entire classes of desires. Both morally evil desires and mistaken desires present problems for the thesis that God as object of beatitude is the satisfaction of all desires, since it would be morally objectionable to think that God satisfies morally evil desires and at least anomalous to think that he satisfies mistaken desires.

With regard to the problem of evil desires, Thomas holds that rightness of will is characteristic of all the blessed. For he argues that it is an antecedent requirement for happiness on the ground that the will must, like matter with regard to form, be properly prepared for its last end. He says: "The will is rightful when duly bent on its ultimate end (rectitudo voluntatis est per debitum ordinem ad finem ultimum) (S.T. I-II, 4, 4c). This requirement of rightness of will ensures that the desires of the human agent that are to be satisfied in perfect beatitude do not include morally evil desires. The lack of proper order to the ultimate end, we may recall, is for Thomas the formal element in mortal sin (aversio a fine). Thomas maintains in the Summa Contra Gentiles:

> In the man who commits a mortal sin, the intention of his will is completely turned away from his ultimate end; while in the man who commits a venial sin, his intention continues to be fixed on the end, but he is somewhat hindered in that he improperly fixes his intentions on the means to the end (S.C.G. III, 143).

Thomas argues on the basis of this distinction that, it is just for those who completely turn from the last end to be punished by being cut off from the ultimate end and beatitude, whereas those who are impeded in their free movement to the end by an improper concern with means to the end are not to be cut off from the ultimate end but are to be "retarded or made to suffer difficulty in acquiring the end"

(S.C.G. IV, 91). Obviously, then, in the case of those who fundamentally lack the proper direction to the ultimate end and who are therefore to be deprived of beatitude, there can be no question of God's satisfying their morally evil desires. The morally evil desires that may be present in those who are guilty of venial sin are to be extinguished in a process of purgation. Thomas urges the necessity of the will's purification before even a good person can attain the vision of God. He says:

> To that vision no rational creature can be elevated unless it be thoroughly and entirely purified. . . . But by sin the soul is unclean in its disordered union to inferior things.
>
> They must, then, be purged after this life before they achieve the final reward (S.C.G. IV, 91).

We suggest that part of the purification of souls for the beatific vision and the preparation of the will for its ultimate end consists in the extinction of morally evil desires. If these desires are extinguished in the human agents who come to beatitude, the moral and theological difficulties inherent in a situation where God as object of beatitude satisfies morally evil desires simply do not arise; for as Thomas says, "Nobody can come through to happiness without a right good will, which, therefore, is an antecedent condition" (S.T. I-II, 4, 4c).

Rightness of will is also according to Thomas, an attendant condition or consequence of beatitude. For, Thomas writes, "The will of a person who sees God face to face must needs love whatsoever he loves within the embrace of God's goodness (sub ordine ad Deum)

(S.T. I-II, 4, 4c). This, Thomas holds, ensures rightness of will. We should point out that Thomas is here employing a teleological notion of "rightness of will," which we shall have to examine in the following chapter, and also that he relies on his doctrine that the will has a natural and necessary movement to beatitude. Thus he holds that once human agents see God they will never willingly give up the vision of God, nor will they ever be guilty of moral fault (culpa): "A person who sees him face to face cannot fall, for, as we have seen, rightness of will necessarily results from seeing him" (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c). So Thomas rules out the possibility of morally evil desires arising in the agent once beatitude has been attained. Given Thomas's account of the relationship of good to desire and his beliefs about the cognitive situation of the blessed, there is no problem in affirming the persistence of the will in good whereas the persistence of the will in evil, as presupposed in the traditional doctrine of hell, presents difficulties for Thomas, as we saw earlier.

So we have seen that Thomas has little difficulty in excluding morally evil desires from the range of desires to be satisfied by God as the object of beatitude. The end to be attained is not for Thomas a fundamentally non-moral reality which satisfies all desires, irrespective of their moral character. This is, of course, an unsurprising conclusion, given standard Christian beliefs about the moral character of God.

Thomas also considers the more general problem of mistaken desires, a broader category that may or may not include morally evil desires. Thomas is commenting on Augustine's dictum "Blessed is he who has all he wills, and wills for nothing amiss."[29] He observes:

> This description of happiness is well enough in one sense, but not in another. If you take it to refer to wishes that can spring from his nature (naturali appetitu), then it is true that one who has all he wants is happy, for nothing but the perfect good, which is beatitude, satisfies the desires of human nature. If you take it to refer to all that strike him as his wants, (secumdum apprehensionem rationis) then to have some of them will not be his happiness, but rather the reverse: in fact they will stop him from getting what his nature wants. There is a parallel here with the reason which on occasion thinks things are true which in fact are barriers to knowing the truth (S.T. I-II, 5, 8 ad 3).

Here Thomas works with a distinction between things which are desired with a natural appetite and those which are desired by reason. This contrast between reason and nature is not a together happy, given Thomas's definition of the human being as a rational animal. But the intent of the distinction and of its use here seems to be clear enough: God as object of beatitude is to satisfy the natural appetites, that is, those general intellectual and sensitive appetites which arise from human nature, but not particular desires for individual goods that the individual person thinks about and chooses for himself. Now Thomas does not say that none of these particular desires, which the will deals with as the power of decision for the human person, is to be satisfied. That would be more like the suppression of freedom than like the fulfillment of desire. But he does say that some of the things that the individual human agent wants are not compatible with or conducive to the attainment of beatitude. Since on his view all human agents have a natural and necessary inclination of will to beatitude, some agents, if they have desires for things that are incompatible with the attainment of beatitude, cannot have all their desires satisfied. But this seems to require a modification of the claim made earlier that beatitude involves the satisfaction of all desires. The difficulty here arises from the notion that beatitude as the ultimate end "ought so to fulfill a man's whole desire that nothing is left beside for him to desire" (S.T. I-II, 1, 5c). Whether beatitude is thought of in inclusive or dominant terms, whether it involves the satisfaction of multiple desires by one object or by many objects, the difficulty remains; for, while inclusive ends allow independent means of satisfying desire, they do not allow inconsistent or incompatible ones. Should Thomas then restrict the claim that beatitude satisfies all desires to those desires which are natural and which are directed to those generic goods that correspond to these natural desires? This would narrow his claim too much; for there is no reason to think all those desires which are for individual goods conceived and named by human ingenuity (secundum rationis apprehensionem) are doomed to frustration. A possibility that is open to Thomas is to hold that those desires whose satisfaction is incompatible with beatitude would be extinguished and so that only a human agent's actual desires would be satisfied in beatitude. The desires to be extinguished would include desires that arise from false beliefs, and desires that involve conceptual confusions as well as desires for morally evil objects. It could then be held that desires and inclinations for those goods to which there is a natural inclination would not be extinguished as a result of the cognitive changes involved in the attainment of beatitude and that this conclusion could be known even now, but that particular desires for particular goods might or might not be extinguished, depending on their cognitive foundation and moral standing.

Some of these modifications of Thomas's formulations, even though they are based on what Thomas himself says, will appear speculative, because they deal with a situation in a future life that seems distant, unimaginable, and even incredible; but the issues that are raised are important for an understanding of how Thomas endeavors to reconcile an account of human motivation in which all choices are of good and all activity is directed to universal good and an understanding of good in terms of desire with the need, recognized by both theological and philosophical accounts of morality, to criticize and eliminate certain desires, and with the expectation that an ultimate end should provide at least some definite guidance enabling us to reject some alternative plans of life and to favor others. In this regard, the kinds of considerations that Thomas works through can be instructive even for those who do not share Thomas's religious and metaphysical views.

The Problem of the Choice of the End

In assessing Thomas's account of the ultimate end of human activity there remains one fundamental problem that has not been considered thus far, namely, the question of the choice of ends. Now this formulation of the problem is not itself acceptable to Thomas; for he accepts Aristotle's doctrine that choice is always of means and not of ends.[30] His argument for this view is drawn from his view of practical reasoning. He says:

> We have noted that choice (electio) follows the decision or verdict (sententiam vel judicium), which, as it were, is a conclusion to a practical syllogism. It is this which offers the object of choice. Now in matters of practice the end stands like a principle, not a conclusion as Aristotle observes. Therefore an end is not, as such, a matter of choice" (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c).

This argument allows for an end that provides the principle or premise in one practical syllogism to serve also as the means decided on in the conclusion of another practical syllogism. Thomas allows for most ends to be regarded as means and for premises to become conclusions as more fundamental purposes and reasons are uncovered in the course of practical argument. "The last end, however, is no way a matter of choice" (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c). The unique last end, beatitude, serves as the first premise of all practical reasoning. Since there is a natural and necessary movement of the will to this last end, it serves as the fixed point for both willing and practical thinking in Thomas's system. It exercises a normative function with regard to human actions and proposals for action, which, as we have seen, Thomas believes are all directed to this ultimate end. In Thomas's approach, it is always relevant and appropriate to ask whether a given action is a correct or right or rational means to the ultimate end. The ultimate end, which is removed from the realm of choice, provides a non-arbitrary foundation for practical argument.

Thomas, however, as we have seen, has to admit that there is disagreement as to what constitutes this ultimate end. For while there is agreement as to the ratio of the ultimate end, which is happiness, there is disagreement as to where this is to be found: "for some want riches, others a life of pleasure, others something else" (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c). These differences as to the object of beatitude are the sources of different ways of life (diversa studia vivendi) (S.T. I-II, 1, 7 ad 2). Now it clearly is possible for human beings to make choices not simply among these different ways of life but also among the different goods to which they are directed and which serve as alternative dominant ends. Thomas also has to reckon with the problem of sin, which on his account involves a turning away from the ultimate end, which then would have to be an object to be chosen or rejected. Thomas's initial move in handling this problem is to grant that in sin human beings turn away from God or "that in which the idea of the ultimate end is truly realized" but "not from the intention of reaching it, which mistakenly they seek elsewhere" (S.T. I-II, 1, 7 ad 1). We may note Thomas's recurring tendency to think of sin in terms that are appropriate to cognitive error. But, as we have seen in considering Thomas's account of sin, he does believe that it is possible for a human agent to hate God, though not when his essence is seen in the beatific vision (S.T. II-II, 34, 1c), and that the sin of hating God is a voluntary turning of the will from God (S.T. II-II, 34, 2c) and so not merely a matter of ignorance. Thomas clearly teaches that once God is seen there is no possibility of a human person's turning voluntarily from him by any sinful act (S.T. I-II, 5, 4c); and so in this way sin does depend on a certain lack of knowledge. But that does not commit him to reducing all sins to sins of ignorance; and in fact we have seen that he recognizes sins of weakness, and sins of malice as well as sins of ignorance

(S.T. I-II, 76-78), even though he is unable to give a satisfactory account of the latter. Also, the mere overcoming of ignorance about the thesis that God is the final end, does not, as we can see from the case of the damned, produce of itself a loving movement of the will toward God (see S.T. I, 64, 2 ad 3). So Thomas must allow the possibility of a human agent's voluntarily rejecting God, who as universal good is the last end, and also of his voluntarily choosing or accepting God, at least in the sense of his not voluntarily sinning against God.

If God is an object of choice, then is he a means? Thomas could, of course, avoid the problems connected with this embarrassing question by giving up the thesis that choice is always of means and not of ends; but this would by allowing free choice of the ultimate end introduce a voluntaristic foundation for the whole structure of practical reasoning, and Thomas gives no signs of wanting to do that. What answers, then, are open to him? One is to maintain that the ultimate end is beatitude and that God is within the limits of this life, where he can be accepted or rejected, an object of choice and therefore a means. In the future state, both before and after the resurrection, God as universal good is the object of beatitude and of the will's activity, but not of choice. The choice of God in this life brings back the problem of egoism, for God then is regarded by the agent as a means to his own beatitude. Such a view is also likely to strike most religious believers as a radical misreading of both Christian faith and religious experience. It is also in opposition to Thomas's own ordering of goods, in which God is always clearly the summum bonum and not a means to other goods. Also Thomas holds, as a Christian theologian must, that God is to be loved above all things (Lk 10:27); and so he says: "Accordingly man is bound in charity to love God who is the common good of all things, more than himself" (S.T. II-II, 26, 3c).

At the least, the human choice of God, given Thomas's acceptance of Aristotle's maxim on choice of means, involves treating objective beatitude (God or the highest good) as a means to subjective beatitude (satisfaction or happiness). But as Thomas himself points out, these are simply two aspects of one reality. He says in discussing our enjoyment of the last end:

> We spoke of an end in a double sense; one, the thing itself (ipsa res), two, our gaining it (adeptio rei). These of course are not two ends, for the first is the end in itself, the second is that as applied to us. God is our last end as the objective reality (res) ultimately sought for, whereas enjoying him is our obtaining this ultimate. And so God is not one end, and the enjoyment of him another, so also it is by the same enjoyment that we enjoy God and enjoy enjoying him (S.T. I-II, 11, 3 ad 3).

It seems both logically confused and religiously suspect to regard God as a means. So Thomas seems to be committed to the views that God simply is our last end and that beatitude, precisely because it is the human attainment of God, is not a distinct ultimate end. And yet Thomas says in considering the question whether the last end can be used, that "in relation to a person, it is the possessing that is the last end; a miser would not seek money were it not that he might hoard it" (S.T. I-II, 16, 3c). Thomas is reluctant to apply such language to God; but, given his reasoning here, there would seem to be no barrier to saying that the holy or good person would not seek God except to possess him.

The question, then, is whether Thomas has some way out of this tangle which will enable him to affirm that God is the human last end without falling into egoism? One move that he might make but that so far as we can see, he does not use is to argue that, while God himself as the ultimate end is beyond choice, human agents can make choices only with regard to certain activities that they might engage in with regard to God, e.g., praying, obeying, imitating, loving, fearing, etc. This would pick up the earlier mentioned claim by Thomas that the object of choice is always an action (S.T. I-II, 13, 4c). A defender of Thomas can then argue that what is being chosen is a certain action in regard to God, that this action serves as a means to the ultimate end of beatitude, and that the difficulties that result from regarding God as a means simply do not arise. In a certain sense, this is very likely right as an account of most ordinary choices in the careers of human agents with religious beliefs; there are choices to obey God, to pray to God, etc. But it fails to shed light on two important aspects of the agent's relationship to God as objective last end: a) the element of choice and freedom in regarding God rather than some other good or value as one's last end, and b) the multiplicity of actions that is included within the open-ended personal commitment that is present in aiming at God as one's ultimate end. Thus it is doubtful that the attitude of the believer aiming at God regarded as his ultimate end can be seen simply as the sum of choices of particular actions that he might employ as means to his end. These difficulties do not arise specifically from taking God as the ultimate end, but rather from taking any thing or person or value as ultimate end (as contrasted with an activity). In any event, this is not a line that Thomas himself explores.

What follows is an attempt to work out some of the difficulties that arise from what Thomas says about God as ultimate end and his reliance on the Aristotelian dictum about choice:

(1) The human agent necessarily aims at happiness (S.T. I, 82, 2c; I-II, 5, 8c).

(2) The human agent necessarily aims at the satisfaction of all his desires as his ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c).

(3) Satisfaction of all the human agent's actual desires in the future state is found in God (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c; I-II, 4, 8c).

(4) Not every human agent aims at God as his ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 1, 7c).

(5) The human agent, at least under normal circumstances of this present life, is free to accept or reject God, to turn to him or from him (S.T. I, 82, 2c; I-II, 9, 6 *ad* 3).

(6) No human agent can choose God as his ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c).

(7) A human agent can believe that satisfaction of all the human agent's actual desires in the future state is found in God (3).

(8) A human being who believes that satisfaction of all

> the human agent's actual desires in the future state is found in God can choose to aim at God as that which provides the satisfaction of all his desires (S.T. I-II, 3, 8c; II-II, 27, 3c).

In these theses, the English expression "aiming at" is intended to capture Thomas's notion of the intentio finis, a tending to another on the part of the will (S.T. I-II, 12, 1c), which is always directed to an end and not to a means, though the end need not in all cases be the ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 12, 2c).

(1) and (2) establish the eudaemonistic teleological account of human activity in general; (2) fills out (1) by using Thomas's notion of the meaning or ratio of beatitude. Taken together (1) and 2) raise some important problems. Even if it is the case that in every human act, using that term as Thomas does to refer to voluntary actions proceeding from human intellect and will (S.T. I-II, 6, 1c), the human agent acts to satisfy some desire, this would not show that there is some one thing capable of satisfying all desires that is aimed at in every human act. Thomas does attempt to indicate how God as universal good could satisfy all the desires in a future state; but we have seen that this rests on the questionable metaphysical claim that God can be identified with universal good, that it is not clear how God includes certain particular goods (e.g., friends) that are certainly desired by human persons, and that it involves many speculative ad hoc assumptions about events in a future state.

But even if all these difficulties can be worked out, there remains the question of what human agents in this life are thought to be aiming at when they aim at the complete satisfaction of their desires or at happiness without some specification of what happiness consists in for the agent. Since Thomas thinks that in every human action the human agent wills "on account of his love for the ultimate end" (S.T. I-II, I, 6c), he confronts the problem of understanding the ultimate end so that there are no counter-examples to the direction of human actions to the ultimate end. We have already seen something of this problem in assessing Kenny's argument that we can have desires that all our desires not be satisfied and in accounting for acts of renunciation and altruism. The point that we raise here is not so much concerned with whether (1) and (2) are true, but rather with what content the notion of ultimate end has if we assume that they are and that counter-examples can be fitted into the teleological scheme that is being proposed here. Here we find that in itself a view such as (2) does not provide the agent with the basis for a plan of life. Since every action, good or bad, wise or foolish, right or wrong, benevolent or selfish, is necessarily directed to the end of the complete satisfaction of desire, in Thomas's view, an end so general does not in itself provide guidance for choosing one action over another; for all actions are directed to the same end. Since the end as described is not attainable under the conditions of this present life, even though Thomas holds that it is the goal for actions in this present life, it is not clear how it can aid us in the selection of one means over another. We might adopt a policy of maximizing satisfaction of our desires and we might add to this a ranking of various goods that satisfy our desires or of the desires that we want to satisfy, and we might then choose particular actions in the light of our estimates of their likely consequences for our attainment of goods and the satisfaction of our desires. But in that case it is not clear what, if anything, talk about an ultimate end adds to this policy. It may simply be a way of pointing to the fact that any policy of this sort leaves at least some of our desires unsatisfied and so falls short of an ideal situation that we can imagine. But recognition of this fact is the recognition of a constraint that life in this world imposes on our desires and that has to be accepted before we go about the task of deciding on a rational plan of life; it does not provide a goal that we must or should aim at.

This conclusion does not show that Thomas's view that we desire the complete satisfaction of our desires is absurd or even false, only that it is not to be made the basis of rational planning. For it can reasonably be held that to talk about accepting the frustration of our desires implies that there is some movement of desire to the goods that we acknowledge as unattainable and that we still in some sense desire these goods and all others that would satisfy our appetites.

(3) is a doctrine that we have already assessed at some length; and we have seen that, if it is to be plausible at all, it requires considerable modification of the actual desires of persons as we know them in this life.

(4) does not present any serious problems, at least when it is restricted to the intentions that are explicit and operative in

human acts. For there are some theologians who would argue that there are unconscious desires for and intentions of God even among atheists.

(5) has the added restriction to normal circumstances because Thomas, along with many other Christian theologians, holds that God himself can move the will in certain ways that are not subject to human control. Thus he says: "A man, however, makes up his own mind with respect to the willing of this or that, which may be authentically or only seemingly a good a good. All the same sometimes God moves us to will a determinate good, as when he quickens us by his grace" (S.T. I-II, 9, 6 *ad* 3). But it is clear from what he says elsewhere that Thomas would accept (5).

(5) has an interesting consequence for understanding Thomas's notion of sin, which, as we have seen, he defines as a turning away from the ultimate end (*aversio ab ultimo fine*), and which he believes to be a voluntary and free human (or angelic) act. Now, since Thomas believes that every human act is necessarily directed to the ultimate end taken in its general sense of the satisfaction of all desires, Thomas cannot interpret sin as a turning away from the ultimate end in that sense. Sin is to be taken as a turning away from that in which the ultimate end of total satisfaction is realized, i.e., in Thomas's scheme of things, God. In itself this is not a surprising conclusion. But it has embarrassing results for Thomas. For either God as the ultimate end can be freely chosen or rejected, and then Thomas has to give up the Aristotelian restriction of choice to means; or God has to be regarded as a means, and the definition

of sin as a turning from the ultimate end has to be given up.

(6) makes explicit a consequence of Thomas's acceptance of the Aristotelian restriction of choice to means. If God is to be freely taken as the goal to which one directs one's life and activities, then one has, on Thomas's principles, to regard God as a means. Or one could deny that one is freely choosing God as one's ultimate end. Both these options go contrary to the language in which many religious people describe aspects of their relationship to God; but the second would be compatible with traditional theological affirmations of predestination and divine election, which Thomas himself held.

(7) is simply an affirmation that a human person can believe (3). Whatever problems affect it arise from (3). We can consider Thomas himself as the human agent in question.

(8) affirms that an individual can freely direct his activity to God as an end, though not as the ultimate end in Thomas's understanding of that term. Thomas does admit that an end can be chosen but only as a means in relation to a further end. (S.T. I-II, 13, 3c). So subjective beatitude or the satisfaction of desire would still be regarded as the ultimate end. In contrast with the ultimate end of total satisfaction, God as the end of human activity can provide the basis for preferring certain plans of life over others. There are, as we shall point out in the following chapter and as Thomas himself acknowledges, insuperable difficulties to regarding God as an end to be attained through the causal efficacy of human actions undertaken in the circumstances of this life.

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But there are alternative ways of having God serve as the end of human activity. Thus God could be taken as the ideal, and activity could be undertaken to bring the agent into a condition of resemblance to him. This is the way in which Thomas speaks of God as the end for non-rational creatures, who, he says, "come to their final end through sharing in some likeness to God" (S.T. I-II, 1, 8c). The objective of likeness to God in some way or other could be consciously pursued as a goal, which would preserve a teleological direction of human activity to God, even though God himself would not be the end in a strict sense. Another possibility is that rather than taking God as an end directly and causally related to human activity, the relation between human activity and the vision of God could be taken as one between merit and reward which involves God's activities of commanding, judging, and rewarding or punishing. This approach builds on traditional Christian beliefs held by Thomas himself and by most traditional Christian theologians. In such an approach, God would serve as both judge and reward. What is characteristic of both these possibilities is that God as end or quasi-end can provide definite guidance for action. This is obvious in the second alternative, in which God can command certain kinds of activity and forbid others, and those who hope to attain him can shape plans of life accordingly. In the first alternative, some specification of what divine attributes are to be imitated would be necessary. Both alternatives allow for the possibility of sin or failure, of actions that are not directed to the end, but involve a turning away from it. They also allow for judgments that certain actions or classes of actions are or are not conducive to or compatible with the end. Both alternatives are consistent with Thomas's belief that God in the future state does satisfy all actual desires of human agents; but they introduce a definite end to be aimed at without which the necessary pursuit of the last end would be an uninformative and unhelpful thesis. We shall have more to say about both these alternatives when we consider the question of how Thomas's notion of God as end and his theory of natural law are to be related to each other.

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Footnotes to Chapter V

[1] W.F.R. Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's *Ethics*," in *Aristotle*, ed. J. M. E. Moravcsik (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), p. 300.

[2] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, X. 7. 1177a13.

[3] Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's *Ethics*," p. 300.

[4] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I. 7. 1098a3-18.

[5] Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's *Ethics*, p. 300.

[4] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, I. 7. 1098a3-18.

[5] Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's *Ethics*, p. 300.

[6] On the value of such con tributions to the life of the moral community and the importance of not structuring moral theory so as to preclude them, see the essays by J. O. Urmson, "Saints and Heroes" in *Essays in Moral Philosophy*, ed. A. I. Melden (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1958), pp. 198-216 , and by P. F. Strawson, "Social Morality and Individual Ideal," in *Readings in Contemporary Ethical Theory*, ed. Kenneth Pahel and Marvin Schiller (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp. 344-359.

[7] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*.: (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1971), p. 554.

[8] Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, III. 2.

[9] Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's *Ethics*," p. 300.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX. 1; XIX. 4.

[12] Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 552.

[13] W.F.R. Hardie, *Aristotle's Ethical Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 337-338.

[14] D. J. O'Connor, Aquinas and Natural Law (London: Macmillan, 1968), p. 26.

[15] John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, In Essays on Politics and Society, ed. J. M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 261.

[16] Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State, and Utopia (New York: Basic Books, 1974), p. 310.

[17] O'Connor, pp. 27-28.

[18] For instance, the Second and Third Noble Truths of Buddhism. These are discussed in Arthur Danto, Mysticism and Morality (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 68-74.

[19] William Shakespeare, Antony and Cleopatra, V. 2. 183.

[20] O'Connor, pp. 28-30.

[21] On this point, consult the famous polemic of St. Paul against those who hope to find salvation by human wisdom in 1 Cor. 1: 18-31.

[22] On this contrast, consult Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy, Volume II, Medieval Philosophy (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Image, 1962), Part I, p. 97 (on Augustine); Part I, p. 321 (on Bonaventure).

[23] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics X. 8. 1178b8-23.

[24] Aristotle, Metaphysics XII. 9. 1074b15-34.

[25] W.F.R. Hardie, Aristotle's Ethical Theory, p. 339.

[26] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, I. 7. 1097b16-19.

[27] Quotations from the Summa Contra Gentiles are drawn from St. Thomas Aquinas, On the Truth of the Catholic Faith, Book Four: Salvation, tr. Charles J. O'Neil (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Image).

[28] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics X. 4. 1174b24-1175a2.

[29] St. Augustine, De Trinitate XIII, 5.

[30] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, III. 3. 1112b12-1113a5.

CHAPTER VI

THE ULTIMATE END AND MORALITY

Thus far we have concentrated our attention on Thomas's account of natural inclinations and the goods that are their objects, particularly the natural and necessary inclination of the human will to beatitude. Extended consideration of this natural inclination is appropriate, because Thomas, as we have seen, regards the last end or beatitude as the first principle in practical reasoning (see S.T. I-II, 1, 5c; I-II, 14, 5c). But it seems that, except for occasional reflections, we have been spending our time in the realm of what Bishop Butler would speak of as "self-love" and that the relation of all this talk of natural inclinations and appetites to morality is unclear. So the primary purpose of this chapter will be to explore some of the connections between Thomas's account of natural inclinations and his theory of morality and to examine some of the ways in which the former can serve as the basis of the latter.

One account of these connections would be the thesis that the "moral institution of life" is merely instrumental to the human individual's pursuit of the objects of his or her natural inclinations and, specifically, of beatitude. This seems to be implied by Thomas's claim that "all a man's desires are on account of his love for the ultimate end" (S.T. I-II, 1, 6c). An alternative position would be to hold that the good of morality is itself the object of a distinct natural inclination on an equal footing with other natural inclinations. This seems to be suggested when Thomas says that the human person "has a natural tendency to act according to reason, that is to say, according to virtue" (S.T. I-II, 94, 3c). How is the satisfaction of this inclination to act according to reason and to virtue related to the attainment of happiness? Is it a necessary condition for the attainment of beatitude or a necessary and sufficient condition? Or should Thomas be interpreted as having an account of morality which is in principle independent of the human pursuit of beatitude so that its requirements and precepts are known even to those who do not believe that God is the ultimate end of human activity?

In discussing the relation of Thomas's ethical theory to his account of natural inclinations, we will begin by examining the natural inclination to beatitude; and then we will consider the connection that Thomas proposes between moral precepts and natural inclinations in general. There are a number of arguments for holding that Thomas is committed to some form of theological instrumentalism in his account of morality, that is, to the view that moral goods and the moral institutions of life are means to the attainment of the ultimate end, beatitude, which, as we have seen, consists for Thomas in the immediate vision of God's essence. Reviewing some of these arguments and criticizing them in the lights of those texts which support the contrary interpretation of Thomas as a moral theorist who accords to moral goodness a standing beyond that of means to the last end of the human individual can serve both to clarify the relations between Thomas's account of our natural inclinations and his moral theory and to bring to light certain difficulties in his overall position. It is not our view that the textual evidence for either of these interpretations of Thomas is overwhelming or conclusive. Rather, after our review of these arguments, we will propose an approach to Thomas's moral theory which affirms that a merely instrumental view of morality is inconsistent with important elements of Thomas's moral theory, notably his theory of natural law.

Arguments for an Instrumentalist View of Morality

The first line of argument in support of the instrumentalist view is Thomas's dictum that the last end is the first principle of practical reason in the light of which means are to be deliberated about and chosen. Thomas affirms that "in matters of practice the end has the force of a principle because from it derive the reasons for adopting the means" (S.T. I-II, 14, 2c). The last end, then, about which in Thomas's view there can be neither deliberation nor choice, serves as the first principle for all practical reasoning (S.T. I-II, 13, 2c). The choice of specific goods, e.g., to do a morally good action, then depends on the agent's beliefs about the relation of that action to the ultimate end. But, as we shall see, this does not commit Thomas to the view that the criterion for the moral goodness of actions is their conduciveness as means to the last end; it does commit him to the view that morally good actions do in fact lead to the last end. For, if practical reason grasps this factual connection between morally good action and the last end, then the agent can deliberate about and choose morally good actions as means to the last end without having to believe that moral goodness consists in the relationship of the action to the last end or that moral goodness is a merely instrumental value. The choice of morally good actions is then compatible with the natural and necessary inclination of the agent's will to his own beatitude and thus with his self-interest properly conceived. This holds true, no matter what sacrifices the agent may have to make in this life in order to do those morally good actions which are, for one reason or another, obligatory.

A second line of argument to support the conclusion that Thomas treats moral virtues and good acts as means to the last end can be drawn from the order in which he proceeds in the _Summa Theologiae_ and specifically in the _Prima Secundae_. There, in accordance with the thesis that the last end is the first principle of practical reason, Thomas begins his treatment of moral life by considering man's last end (Questions 1-5) and only later considers the goodness of human acts (Questions 18-21), the moral virtues (Questions 58-65), and the precepts of the natural law (Question 94). So, after propounding his view that the happiness to be found in God is the last end of human activity, Thomas introduces his consideration of human acts with the following remarks:

> Since we cannot come to happiness save through some activity, we have now to attend to human acts, so that we may learn which of them will open the way and which of them will block it. . . .

> Moral science accordingly, since it is about human acts, will discuss them first in general and then afterwards in particular terms (S.T. I-II, 6, Prologus)

Here Thomas seems to envision the worth of human acts merely in terms of their instrumental contribution to the attainment of the last end. It is not so much that such a restricted view is explicitly affirmed as that the instrumental view is persistently present in Thomas's comments and in the design of this work.

A third line of argument would be based on Thomas's requirements that "for an act of human will to be good, then, it must be ordered to the supreme good" and that "for human willing to be good it has to be conformed to the divine will" (S.T. I-II, 19, 9c). These requirements, if taken in isolation, could lead us to the view that Thomas requires an explicit intention by the moral agent directing his activity to God, the supreme good and ultimate end. The second of these requirements could also be taken as proposing an ethics of obedience to God's commands. But Thomas's argument in this article is actually that human will should be conformed to the divine will "by imitation" (S.T. I-II, 19, 9 ad 1). The human will imitates the divine will by being directed, as the divine will is, to the "supreme good . . . that relates directly and immediately as its proper object to the divine will" (S.T. I-II, 19, 9c). So conformity to God's will here is not a matter of obeying commands, but of willing the good that God himself wills; this is a possibility that is open even to those who do not believe that God issues commands or who do not know what his commands are.

We have already considered some of the difficulties arising from Thomas's earlier thesis that everything a human person wills he wills on account of the ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 1, 6c). It should be remembered that in that earlier context Thomas grants that "we are not expected always to be thinking of our last end whenever we desire or do something in particular" (S.T. I-II, 1, 6 ad 3). The example that he uses in making this concession is that "in walking somewhere one does not have to be reminding oneself of one's destination at every step" (S.T. I-II, 1, 6 ad 3). If we use this example in interpreting the requirement that the act of human will be ordered to the supreme good, it seems that what is required is not a simple compatibility between some lesser good aimed at in the act and the supreme good, nor an explicit intention to arrive at the supreme good by means of the act. The walking example suggests that the act and the good aimed at by it must be at least causally conducive to the ultimate end, that they must actually bring the agent a step closer to the end. There are obvious difficulties about just what actions are causally conducive to the ultimate end when this is taken to be God as seen or possessed in the beatific vision, as well as about how human actions of any sort can bring about the attainment of this end. When the ultimate end is taken to be simply good in general, then, given Thomas's thesis that choice is of good and that all goods are necessarily included in good in general, the requirement that a good act of the will be ordered to the ultimate end becomes empty.

A fourth line of argument leading to the conclusion that Thomas has a view of moral good as instrumental to the last end can be drawn from his account of the function of sanctions for law.[1] Having pointed out that "law is a kind of direction or measure for human activity through which a person is lead to do something or held back" (*S.T.* I-II, 90, 1c), Thomas argues that before law can regulate or direct human activity, it has to be applied to its subjects by promulgation. He says: "To have binding force (*virtutem obligandi*) which is an essential property of a law (*proprium legis*), it has to be applied to the people it is meant to direct" (*S.T.* I-II, 90, 4c). The requirement that law be promulgated belongs to the essence of law and so holds for all the types of law that Thomas recognizes, including natural and eternal law. To induce people to action, law also requires the backing of force and the possibility of punishment. Thus a private person cannot make law or inflict penalties for noncompliance with his directives. Thomas says: "If his advice is not taken, he lacks the force (*vim coactivam*), such as a law should possess, to compel good conduct" (*S.T.* I-II, 90, 3 *ad* 2). One of the characteristic acts of law is to punish (*S.T.* I-II, 92, 2 *ad* 3). Thomas observes with approval that "the fear of penalty is worked on in order to ensure obedience" (*S.T.* I-II, 92, 2c). It should be said that Thomas clearly regards uncoerced obedience to law as preferable to coerced conformity; for he holds that "the will of good men harmonizes with the law, whereas the will of wicked men clashes with it" (*S.T.* I-II, 96, 5c). Hans Reiner has discussed the view that the notion of obligation in Thomas's discussion of natural law is really a notion of a conditional imperative which depends for its force on the willing of the end, and that it is therefore eudaemonistic and not strictly moral. The pattern that is supposed here, even though it is not made explicit in the Summa Theologiae, which was left incomplete at the time of Thomas's death and which lacks a comprehensive treatment of such topics as divine judgment and eternal reward and punishment, is that God as ruler of the world is the source of laws which are enforced with appropriate rewards and punishments, so that the individual pursuing his own happiness must choose certain means which are thus both commanded by God and to the agent's own advantage. In this view, sanctions serve as a reason for being moral for those rational agents whose conception of their own good either does not include moral goodness, or allows at least occasional nonperformance of actions that are morally good and obligatory. But, as Reiner himself points out, Thomas nowhere in his works shows that there is a threat of punishment precisely corresponding to the law of nature, though there is such a threat of punishment corresponding to the divine law. Given what Thomas holds about the necessity of coercive sanctions for law, this failure to establish a sanction for the law of nature involves an important "gap" in his theory of of natural law.[2]

The End of Law and the Common Good

A fifth line of argument to show that Thomas adopts an instrumental view of morality is drawn from his notion of law. In S.T. I-II, 90, which is the question on the essentia of law, Thomas affirms:

> Now the deeds we perform, these being the concern of the practical reason, all originate from our last end. We have shown

> that the last end of human living is happiness or well-being. Consequently law is engaged above all with the plan of things for human happiness (S.T. I-II, 90, 2c).

He then goes on to make the point that the happiness to which our activity is directed and which practical reason takes as fundamental is not individual or personal but is rather common and social. He says:

> Since the subordination of part to whole is that of incomplete to rounded-off reality (perfectum), and since a human individual man is part of the full life of the community, it must needs be that law properly speaking deals with this subordination (ordinem) to a common happiness (S.T. I-II, 90, 2c).

Here we can see at work Thomas's earlier noted tendency to dissolve the egoistic elements in his theory of human conduct into a larger, more universal reality which includes the agent and so does not stand over against him as another who is to be treated altruistically. Thomas then goes on to his conclusion: "Therefore every law is shaped to the common good (ordinatur ad bonum commune)" (S.T. I-II, 90, 2c). This view that law is directed to the common good could be made the basis of a utilitarian interpretation of Thomas, in which morally right action is action which is conducive to the non-moral good of the happiness or well-being of a human community. This would be a familiar and specific form of instrumentalism, in which morality is a means to the attainment of our happiness.

Before we accept a utilitarian interpretation of Thomas's moral theory, we should, however, examine how Thomas thinks of the relationship between natural law and the attainment of our last end or beatitude.

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The view that law is directed to the common good is a thesis that Thomas holds with regard to each of the major kinds of law that he distinguishes: eternal, natural, human and divine (S.T. I-II, 91). Of these the last two are forms of positive law and are of less immediate concern to us. Thomas tells us that "natural law is nothing other than the sharing in the Eternal Law by intelligent creatures" (S.T. I-II, 91, 2c) and so is not separate from eternal law, which is "the ruling idea of things which exist in God as the effective sovereign of them all" (S.T. I-II, 91, 1c). Natural law regulates the direction of human activity to the ultimate end (S.T. I-II, 91, 2 *ad* 2). It is clear from the way in which Thomas speaks of natural law and the examples that he gives of natural law precepts, that he thinks of the precepts of natural law as prescriptive for human action and not simply as descriptive of regularities of human action. Thus among the precepts of the natural law are "that a man should shun ignorance, not offend others with whom he ought to live in civility and other such related requirements" (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c). Thomas holds that all the moral precepts of the Old Law, as contrasted with the judicial and ceremonial precepts, belong to the natural law (S.T. I-II, 100, 1c); and, he explicitly affirms that the precepts of the decalogue belong to the natural law (S.T. I-II, 100, 3c) as well as to divine positive law.

It is remarkable that Thomas does not, in the course of his discussion of law in the *Summa Theologiae*, spell out the common good to which natural law must be directed if it is to be law. He does tell us that the natural law both urges us to do good and regulates our pursuit of various goods (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c). But one can argue that since Thomas holds that the natural law is a creaturely participation in eternal law (S.T. I-II, 91, 2c) and that the end of the eternal law is God himself (S.T. I-II, 91, 1 ad 3), the end of the natural law or the common good to which it is ordered is God himself. This conclusion accords with Thomas's treatment of the decalogue as both natural law and divine positive law, for God is also the end to which divine positive law is directed. What Thomas says about divine positive law may then be taken as some indication of the teleological character of natural law and its direction to the common good. He writes:

> But the community for which the divine law is given is that of men in relation to God (ordinat ad Deum), whether in the present or the future life. The divine law, therefore, lays down precepts about all matters which affect man's right disposition (bene ordinentur), for communication with God. Now man is joined to God by his reason or mind, in which the image of God is present; and therefore the divine law lays down commands about whatever disposes human reason aright. This comes about through acts of all the virtues. . . . It is thus evident that the divine law appropriately enjoins acts of all the virtues. Some actions, however, those essential to the order of virtue, which is that of reason, it makes obligatory; others, not essential, but belonging to the perfection of virtue, it simply makes a matter of counsel (S.T. I-II, 100, 2c).

The view that Thomas proposes here is that the precepts of divine law (which are at least in part identical with precepts of natural law) are means to the right or appropriate disposition of the human mind to its fulfillment in the vision of God, which is the supreme good for it. As we have already argued, Thomas here employs an overly intellectualist and individualist conception of human good which

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identifies human fulfillment with the individual intellect's attainment of its ultimate object and supreme good. What the pursuit of this good leads to is a community between God and man, based on the union of the mind of the individual human being (homo) with its object. The good aimed at in divine law is a common good in the sense that for Thomas it is the appropriate perfection and good for each and every human person, but not in the sense that it is directly attained by common effort or is the fulfillment of a community in its social life.

This should make us cautious about interpreting Thomas along utilitarian lines, for the attainment of such a "common good," especially in circumstances radically different from those of this life, can be the result of a convergence of rational self-interest. The rules or laws requiring or forbidding actions by the Thomistic moral agent would then be arrived at by his or God's consideration of the end of his own happiness, a consideration which need not include reference to the happiness of other human persons. Such a method of arriving at or justifying moral rules would be different from that proposed in utilitarianism, though it might reach the same conclusions. But it would still be an instrumental view of morality.

We can see that Thomas's notion of the end of divine law is more individualistic than his conception of the end of human law. In discussing the proper scope of human law, he contrasts the private good of the individual person and the common good of the people (bonum commune multitudinis), and then lays down the following conclusion:

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> Human law does not enjoin every act of every virtue, but those acts only which serve the common good, either immediately, as when the social order is directly involved from the nature of things, or mediately, as when measures of good discipline are passed by the legislation to train citizens to maintain justice and peace in the community (S.T. I-II, 96, 3c).

Here the scope of human law is to be limited by consideration of the end aimed at, namely, the common good of the society to which the law is to apply. This good, while comprehensive in scope, does not include all forms of good, even of moral good, and is confined to the realm of external actions. Thus Thomas maintains that one reason why divine law is needed is to require those acts of virtue that are not appropriately commanded by human law because they fall outside the scope of the common good of a human political community. Thus he writes:

> Men can make laws on matters which they are competent to judge. They cannot pronounce on inward motions which are hidden, but only on outward and observable behavior (de exterioribus actibus qui apparent). Nevertheless full virtue means that a man is right in both. Since human law is not enough, the complement of divine law is needed to check and guide what goes on within us (S.T. I-II, 91, 4c).

The point here is that divine law aims at bringing the individual to the perfection of virtue by requiring and enforcing interior conformity to norms. Such interior conformity is not required for the attainment of goods in society though it is obviously useful for that purpose since it removes a source of inner conflict and of potential disobedience. But it is necessary for the attainment of full virtue that the interior act of the will take as its object the good that is prescribed by the law. Thomas affirms the general primacy of the interior act of the will in determining moral worth: "Since an end is the will's proper (proprium) objective, it is clear that the quality of good or bad possessed by the outward deed by reason of its relation to the end intended is present originally in the will and derivatively in the outward deed" (S.T. I-II, 20, 1c).

The goal or end to which law is directed in divine law is union with God, whereas in human law it is the common good of the relevant political community (S.T. I-II, 96, 3c). The end determines the scope of the precepts included in a given form of law. Thus even though Thomas holds that "the proper effect of law on those to whom it is given is to make them good, either good simply speaking or good in a certain respect" (S.T. I-II, 92, 1c), he does not treat human law primarily as a means to the acquisition of virtue by the citizens but rather as a means to social order. So, in response to the question whether human law should prohibit all vices, he takes a line that comes surprisingly close to the views of H. L. A. Hart:[3]

> Law is laid down for a great number of people, of which the majority have no high standard of morality. Therefore it does not forbid all the vices, from which upright men can keep away, but only those grave ones which the average man can avoid, and chiefly those which do harm to others and have to be stopped if human society is to be maintained, such as murder and theft and so forth (S.T. I-II, 96, 2c).

Making human beings good or virtuous may be what Thomas calls a "proper effect" of law in the sense that it is a result that is more than contingently related to the promulgation and the public acceptance of a precept; but Thomas clearly does not regard it as the proper end of human law to be aimed at directly. So, as we have seen, Thomas holds that "human law does not enjoin every act of every virtue, but those acts only which serve the common good" (S.T. I-II, 96, 3c). He also tells us that while "natural law is a kind of sharing by us in the Eternal Law," human law falls short of the requirements of eternal law (S.T. I-II, 96, 2 *ad* 2). By comparison with eternal law, natural law, and divine law which all, for Thomas, direct humanity to the common good, which is identified with God, human law has the more limited objective of directing persons to the common good of order in society. There is much more reason to think that Thomas offers a rule-utilitarian account of human positive law than of morality, when we consider the difference between the common good in society aimed at by human law and the common good beyond society aimed at by the other and higher forms of law, namely, eternal, natural, and divine law, in which the precepts of morality are found according to Thomas. Obedience to the norms of morality found in the eternal, natural, and divine laws would then be instrumental to the individual's attainment of the goal of contemplative union with God.

Virtue, the Contemplative Life, and the Ultimate End

A sixth line of argument to show that Thomas adopts an instrumental view of morality can be based on a number of things that he says about the relations between the moral virtues and the last end of human activity. Thus in the divine law, as Thomas argues in S.T. I-II, 100, 2c, the virtues serve the intermediate function of disposing the mind for contemplative union with God and so can be treated both as the end of the precepts included in divine law and as means to the ultimate end of union with God. So stated, Thomas's position seems to have affinities both with rule-utiliarianism and trait-utilitarianism, since precepts and traits are to be selected by reason of their instrumental value with regard to the last end.[4] It would correspond to a fusion of these two positions, with rules being adopted as means to the aquisition of traits which in turn are means to the final end. There is also in Thomas's position a direct influence of the last end on the selection of precepts. For Thomas makes the same point about divine law that he makes about human law, namely, that while it commands acts of all the virtues, it does not command all acts of the virtues. He writes: "Some actions, however, those essential to the order of virtue, which is that of reason, it makes obligatory; others not essential, but belonging to the perfection of virtue, it simply makes a matter of counsel" (S.T. I-II, 100, 2c). This restriction of the scope of divine law leaves a place for the liberty of individuals in their pursuit of good and avoids making the best obligatory. It also enables Thomas to avoid the conflicts of precepts and obligations that would arise if all acts of virtue were to be commanded by law. Thomas proposes a similar limitation of the scope of natural law:

> All acts of virtue are of natural law, for each man's own reason naturally dictates that he should act virtuously. But if we are speaking of them as acts of specific virtues in themselves, that is as different kinds of activity, then not all of them are of natural law (S.T. I-II, 94, 3c).

This restriction of the scope of law, both natural and divine, seems reasonable and humane. While Thomas here shows some tendency to make the demands of virtue and the natural law co-extensive, what he says comes closer to affirming that virtuous activity is the "law" and expression of human nature than to claiming that all acts of virtue are commanded by law and are therefore obligatory. But, of course, Thomas would still need a reason why some virtuous actions are commanded by natural law and others are not, since he clearly rejects the view that an action's being virtuous is a sufficient condition for its being commanded. We should also recall that Thomas conceives of mortal sin as a turning away (aversio) from God, the last end (S.T. I-II, 72, 5c). So it can be argued that the acts of virtue which are commanded by natural law are those acts the omission of which would involve a turning away from the ultimate end. This would constitute a direct influence of the ultimate end on the selection of precepts to be included in natural law and would also constitute a basis for determining why some, but not all, virtuous acts are commanded by natural law.

Further emphasis on the instrumental function of the moral virtues can be found in Thomas's account of the active and the contemplative ways of life at the end of the Secunda Secundae. There the function of the moral virtues is to dispose the soul or the person for the attainment of the ultimate end, God. Attainment of the end may be partial, as in the contemplative life as lived under present conditions, or complete, as in the vision of God's essence. Thus Thomas sketches the relation of the moral virtues to the con-

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templative life in the following terms:

> The moral virtues do have their place in the contemplative life as dispositions. The act of contemplation, in which the contemplative life consists essentially, is impeded by the vehemence of the passions, which turn the soul's desire from things of mind to things of sense, and by external disturbances. Now the moral virtues restrain the vehemence of the passions, and quell disturbances from external distractions. Therefore the moral virtues are part of the contemplative life dispositively (S.T. I-II, 180, 2c).

Though Thomas holds that the moral virtues dispose the mind for contemplative life, they do not form part of its essence. In Thomas's view, not even love of God or love of neighbor is essential to contemplative life. For he writes:

> The contemplative life has a motive cause in the will (motivum ex parte affectus), and in this respect the love of God and neighbor is required for the contemplative life. Motive causes, however, do not enter into the essence of a thing, though they prepare for it (disponunt) and complete it. Hence it does not follow that the moral virtues are essentially part of the contemplative life (S.T. I-II, 180, 2 ad 1).

We observe in passing that the question whether the moral virtues form part of the essence of the contemplative life (taken as a way of life to be lived under present conditions) should be kept distinct from the question whether they form part of beatitude.

In speaking of the moral virtues as disposing a person to the contemplative life, Thomas can be taken as proposing that we regard the moral virtues as a means to the attainment of at least partial happiness in the contemplative life. He can also be taken as presupposing some causal propositions about the ways in which moral virtues enable a person to carry on the contemplative life.

There is a certain plausibility to claims that moral virtues by controlling the passions and by enabling the person to deal calmly with external distractions do make the contemplative activity of the intellect possible or easy or attractive. But even if we grant that they can be a means to the end of contemplation and if we accept Thomas's more specific claims that justice, by lessening the occasions for quarrels, brings about peace (S.T. II-II, 180, 2 ad 2) and that chastity "especially makes a man apt for contemplation" (S.T. II-II, 180, 2 ad 3) by freeing him from the weight of sensible things, it is not clear that the moral virtues are a necessary means for the contemplative life. In fact, as we shall see, Thomas does allow that beatitude can be attained without the prior development of the moral virtues, though he does not regard this as a normal situation. Certainly, given Thomas's view that they do not enter into the essence of the contemplative life, he cannot hope to show this by any arguments that involve including particular moral virtues in the contemplative life itself. The thesis that moral virtue is causally necessary for contemplative activity (which includes theoretical science and philosophical reflection as well as religious contemplation) seems to be open to counter-examples from the history of science and of philosophy. Whatever prepared Bertrand Russell's mind for contemplative activity, it does not seem to have been the virtue of chastity. There also seem to be other means for bringing about contemplative states of mind (drugs, meditation, mind control programs, etc) though it might be disputed whether the resulting states of mind are to be considered activities. So Thomas would be left in the position of holding that moral virtues are a means to contemplative activity, but not a necessary means. Our point here is obviously not to cast doubt on the importance or the value of moral virtue, but to question the necessity and universality of the instrumental relations that Thomas proposes between moral virtue and contemplative activity in this life.

The nature of the connections between moral virtues and the attainment of perfect beatitude is a more fundamental problem for Thomas's theory and will be considered somewhat later. But on this topic Thomas does make an important proposal that suggests a closer connection between moral virtues and contemplative activity than is found in his exclusion of moral virtue from the essence of the contemplative life. In considering the question whether the moral virtues remain after this life in the souls of the blessed, he distinguishes in the moral virtues a formal element, which is the order of reason imposed on the appetitive powers, and a material or quasi-material element which is the inclination of the appetitive part to feel and act in certain ways. He then says:

> These moral virtues as regards their material element do not remain in the future life. For then desires and pleasure in matters of food and sex will have no place, nor will fear and daring about dangers of death, nor distributions and exchanges of things employed in this present life. Yet as regards their formal element, they will remain most perfectly in the blessed, inasmuch as the reason of each will be utterly right (rectissima) with regard to the things about him in his state of life and his appetitive power also will be entirely moved according to the order of reason by those things (S.T. I-II, 67, 1c).

In the first part of this passage, Thomas simply applies to the souls of the blessed a claim that Aristotle had already made about the gods.[5]

But he then goes on to single out an element in moral virtue, namely, the order of reason, which is more than a causal precondition for contemplative activity and which is not lost even when the circumstances that call for the exercise of the moral virtues no longer exist.

We may ask why Thomas thinks that this order of reason which ensures the rightness of the will will be present in the blessed. To answer this question, we must turn back to the connection that Thomas affirms between rightness of will and perfect beatitude in S.T. I-II, 4, 4. There we find that Thomas holds that rightness of will is required prior to the attainment of happiness as a preparation of the subject for the attainment of the end. He says:

> Now as material cannot be shaped unless it be duly prepared (debito modo disposita), so likewise nothing gains its end unless it be well adapted to it. The inference is that nobody can come through to happiness without a right good will (rectitudinem voluntatis) (S.T. I-II, 4, 4c).

This is the familiar pattern in which moral worth, conceived either as rightness of will or as moral virtue, prepares or disposes the person for the happiness to be found in contemplative activity and in which moral worth is instrumental to the attainment of the last end.

But it is not merely a means which might be discarded once the end is attained, it is also a consequence of the attainment of the last end. Thomas says:

> It is also an attendant condition (concomitanter) of final happiness, which, as we have stated, consists in the vision of the divine essence, which is goodness pure and unalloyed. And so the will of a person who sees God face to face must needs love

> whatsoever he loves within the embrace of God's goodness (sub ordine ad Deum). . . . So is the will set right, and final happiness cannot exist manifestly without this rightness (S.T. I-II, 4, 4c).

Here Thomas's doctrine that in the beatific vision the human will necessarily loves God and loves all other things in proper relationship to him yields the desired conclusion that rightness of will is necessarily present in the blessed, and that the moral virtues remain most perfectly in the blessed (S.T. I-II, 67, 1c). The moral goodness of the agent, then, is a necessary consequence of the attainment of beatitude, and the relationship between them, which Thomas indicates by the word *concomitanter*, is closer than he proposes between moral virtue and the contemplative life as lived under present conditions. In the life of the blessed, the moral virtues can be regarded as expressions of the rightness of will that is a necessary consequence of attaining perfect good, even though the absence of external and internal conflict deprives them of the normal occasions for exercise and development.

This same move of deriving the presence of the moral virtues from union with the ultimate even in the absence of normal patterns of exercise and development also underlies Thomas's theological doctrine of the infused virtues. The theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity are "called so both because God is their object, inasmuch as they direct us rightly to him, and because they are infused in us by God alone; and because they are made known to us by divine Revelation contained in Sacred Scripture" (S.T. I-II, 62, 1c). It is the function of charity to bring the human person into a "certain spiritual union whereby his will is, so to speak, transformed into the end" (S.T. I-II, 62, 3c). These virtues relate us directly to God as our last end and give us a union with him which exceeds our natural powers. But charity brings with it, according to Thomas, all the moral virtues. Thomas writes:

> Charity, inasmuch as it directs man to his last end, is the source of all the good works that are directed to the last end. In consequence all the moral virtues must needs be infused together with charity since it is through them that man performs each different kind of good work (S.T. I-II, 65, 3c).

When charity is lost through mortal sin, which, as we have seen, is for Thomas a turning away from the last end, all the infused moral virtues are lost as well (S.T. I-II, 65, 3c). The infused virtues, both theological and moral, are present in us from the top down, so to speak; they result, not from habituation, but from union with the ultimate end. This, of course, is at variance with the view of the moral virtues as habits acquired by exercise that Thomas takes over from Aristotle, which we may think of as a view of virtue built from the bottom up, that is from a basis of particular actions which are within the human agent's power.[6] Thus he says that "human virtue, ordained to a good measured by the rule of human reason, can be caused from human acts" (S.T. I-II, 63, 2c); and defines virtue as "a good habit and productive of good" (S.T. I-II, 55, 3c).

So Thomas winds up maintaining that there are both acquired and infused moral virtues and that a person can possess one without the other. For the aversion from God, the ultimate end, that is present by definition in mortal sin, cuts off the source of infused virtue; but such an act need not destroy a habit of acquired virtue (S.T. I-II, 63, 2 ad 2). On the other hand, the presence of an infused virtue, as a result of the will's union with God in charity does not ensure the presence of the corresponding acquired virtue. Thus Thomas says:

> Likewise difficulty may be experienced in the performance of the habits of the infused moral virtues, because of certain contrary dispositions surviving from previous acts. This difficulty does not crop up for the acquired moral virtues, because the repeated acts by which they are acquired remove also the contrary dispositions (S.T. I-II, 65, 3 ad 2).

The distinction between infused and acquired moral virtues enables Thomas to combine the moral psychology of Aristotle with Augustine's notorious thesis that the virtues of the pagans were splendid vices rather than true virtues[7] and with what Thomas took to be Augustine's definition of virtue. This definition holds that "virtue is a good quality of mind by which one lives righteously, of which no one can make bad use, which God works in us without us" (S.T. I-II, 55, 4).[8] This, especially the last phrase, is a notion of virtue that has more affinity with the theological views of the Reformers on the limits of human moral accomplishment than with the moral philosophy of Aristotle.

But, paradoxically, it is Thomas's fidelity to Aristotle's insistence on the primacy of the end in practical life that leads him to prefer Augustine's account of virtue over Aristotle's. This paradox can be seen in the following passage:

> It is therefore clear from what has been said that only the infused virtues are perfect, and deserve to be called virtues absolutely, since they direct a man well to the absolutely

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> ultimate end. The other virtues, those namely that are acquired, are virtues in a limited sense, not without qualification. They direct a man well in respect to what is final in some particular field, not in the whole of life (S.T. I-II, 65, 2c).

Thomas goes on to quote from an author whom he believes to be St. Augustine, but who is actually Prosper of Aquitaine: "He that fails to acknowledge the truth has no true virtue, even if his conduct be good."[9] This, it need hardly be said, is a view that encourages religious believers to assume an attitude of moral superiority to nonbelievers, an attitude which is thereby rendered proof against empirical evidence. But it also exposes some of the basic difficulties arising from Thomas's recurrent tendency to relate all human activity to a unique teleology. For Thomas's doctrine on infused virtues renders problematic the integration of the moral virtues around the pursuit of God as the ultimate end, since the acquired moral virtues are in effect treated as disparate excellences which can be possessed by persons who are not in a real or intentional union with the ultimate end and since the goods aimed at in the exercise of the acquired moral virtues are not linked in any necessary way with the ultimate end. As Thomas admits, in his view "it is more necessary that a man be well-adapted towards his ultimate end, which comes about through charity, than towards other ends, which come about through the moral virtues" (S.T. I-II, 65, 2c). It can plausibly be argued that at this point Thomas is offering us an ethic of conversion or commitment or love, in which the one thing necessary is to be united to God in faith and love. This is in accord with some fundamental tendencies in Christian theology, especially in Paul and Augustine.

We may recall that Augustine at one point defines the cardinal moral virtues of ancient philosophy in terms of the love that we have for God.[10] But it is in effect the reversal of the utilitarian pattern of choosing actions or traits in order to attain happiness or the last end. Also, given Thomas's presuppositions about the absence of charity in pagans, it requires him to acknowledge the relative independence of the acquisition of moral virtue and the development of the life of charity. Both may cover the same territory, but they do so in fundamentally different ways.

Two other considerations also point to the relative independence of moral virtue and union with the ultimate end. First, Thomas admits that it is in principle possible for a human being to attain happiness without prior activity on his part. The text in which he makes this admission is also important for interpreting the rightness of will that he holds is required as an antecedent condition for beatitude. He writes:

> We have already explained how a right good will is required for beatitude, since it is nothing else than a will properly set on the ultimate end, and is as necessary in order to reach it as the due disposition of material in order to receive a form. However, this does not prove that any work of man is an indispensable precondition of his happiness, for God could at one stroke make a man whose will was at once rightly set on its end and already possessing it, as sometimes he simultaneously disposes matter and produces its form (S.T. I-II, 5, 7c).

It is true that Thomas denies that such a possibility is found in the world we actually live in, a point that we can safely grant him. But his allowing the possibility does show that the notion of rightly directing one's will to God does not presuppose morally right activity or the prior existence of moral virtue in the agent.

Second, the distinction that Thomas proposes between the active life and the contemplative life is drawn on the basis of the difference between the ends of the two lives, which are respectively external activity and the consideration of truth (S.T. II-II, 181, 1c). Thomas holds that while the moral virtues enter into the essence of the active life, they do not enter into the essence of the contemplative life (S.T. II-II, 180, 2c). The moral virtues can have, as we have seen, a preparing and disposing function with regard to the contemplative life, but they also have an independent status of their own. Thus he cites Aristotle's authority in linking the moral virtues to active happiness[11] and then goes on to affirm the independence of the goal of the active life. He says: "When the works of the moral virtues are intended as goods for their own sake and not as dispositions for the contemplative life, then the moral virtues form part of the active life" (S.T. II-II, 181, 1 ad 3). Here Thomas can be regarded as building on Aristotle's recognition that morally good activity is its own end.[12] The active life and the good attained by the practice of the moral virtues can be, according to Thomas, subordinated to the contemplative life and treated as disposing to it. But in keeping the distinction between the two ways of life, both of which he regards as worthy and meritorious (S.T. II-II, 182, 2c), and in allowing the active life to be pursued for its own sake, Thomas leaves open the possibility that the moral worth of action depends on factors other than its (potential) instrumental function in regard to the life of contemplation. To argue that the moral good of action is conducive to the attainment of good in general is idle, since this goal is so comprehensive that any object of choice in Thomas's theory falls under it and so contributes to its attainment. Unless the ultimate end is made specific, e.g., by being identified with God, it cannot serve as a basis for determining that some human actions are morally good and some are not. Even if the way in which morally good action is instrumental to attaining union with God is made clear, there is still the need to account for this and similar texts where Thomas seems to affirm that morally good action is an end in itself.

What we have, then, is a situation in which Thomas holds that both good actions and moral virtues are to be instrumental to the ultimate end (even though the way in which they are to perform this instrumental function remains unclear) and that the presence of the infused virtues depends on a positive relation to the ultimate end. On the other hand, good action is admitted to be an end in itself, while the ultimate end is granted to be in principle (though not in practice) attainable without prior good action. So there are considerations that favor ascribing an instrumental interpretation of morality to Thomas, and considerations that tell against such an interpretation.

Three Conceptions of the Ultimate End

One fundamental source of the difficulty in interpreting Thomas's ethical theory in one consistent fashion is that while Thomas clearly wants to unify his account of the practical life of human beings (and even of all creatures) around God as the ultimate end

(S.T. I-II, 1, 8c), he employs three significantly different conceptions of God which bear on different aspects of the practical life.

First, God is presented as universal good; this accounts for the universal and necessary movement of creatures, including intellectual creatures such as angels and human beings, to God. Given Thomas's psychological thesis that appetite and choice are always of good, every human action must be directed to God as ultimate end, however ignorant the agent may be of this end and of the relation of his action to it. God then serves as an all-inclusive end, since nothing that can be chosen can be outside him.

Second, God is presented as a supreme individual good, to which the agent may be related in terms of conversion or aversion. This relationship is freely chosen in sin or in virtuous activity and leads to damnation or salvation. This conception has obvious affinities both with traditional religious views about the overriding importance of adhering to God and loving him above all things, and with a dominant conception of the end, in which one supreme good is to be pursued and all other goods are to be subordinated. As we have seen, Thomas's doctrine of the infused virtues is an effort both to affirm the sufficiency of union with this dominant end to establish all the virtues in the soul and at the same time to deny the sufficiency of the acquired moral virtues for the attainment of this end.

Third, God is also conceived by Thomas (and by orthodox Christian theologians generally) as a personal intelligence capable of issuing commands and making judgments of the moral worth of persons. As we shall see, this conception of God has important consequences for the problem of how the last end is to be attained. It introduces a fundamental element of dialogue and interaction into the practical life of human persons and their search for the good. The end to be aimed at is, so to speak, a moving target. More than that, the end is an intelligent agent whose nature a human intelligence cannot fully comprehend (S.T. I-II, 4, 3 ad 1). The power of this agent is such that he can, as we have seen, create an intelligent being that is at once in full possession of the end. This illustrates Thomas's belief that the human process of moving toward the end is regulated and aided by an omnipotent ruler. Thus Thomas affirms that "in order to be directed to their ultimate supernatural end, men have to be lifted up, and through the divine grant of an additional law which heightens their sharing in the Eternal Law" (S.T. I-II, 91, 4 ad 1). The same conception of God directing the teleological movement of human activity and enabling human beings to attain an ultimate end which lies beyond the resources of their nature is also present in Thomas's doctrine of divine providence (S.T. I, 22, 3c), and in his argument for the necessity of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (S.T. I-II, 62, 1c). Without going into the difficulties involved in the theological contrast between the natural and the supernatural, we can see that the conception of God as a personal being who not merely creates human beings, but also brings them to salvation and union with himself, is necessary if Thomas's account of human activity is to be integrated into a Christian understanding of the history of salvation. But the conception of God as personal and active and as the source of positive norms to govern human actions and the giver of means that are necessary for the attainment of the final end brings Thomas into the realm of divine command theories in ethics. Here we are not thinking of a metaethical account of the meaning of ethical teams,[13] but of the framework of Christian (as well as Jewish) beliefs about the existence and moral character of God.

This persistence of a divine command framework is important in Thomas's handling of the problem of dispensations from the precepts of the natural law. This problem arose for Thomas as a theologian from certain stories in the Old Testament, of which the most famous is Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. But these problem cases also include Samson's killing of himself by pulling down the temple of the Philistines, Osee's intercourse with a prostitute, and the Israelites' despoiling of the Egyptians at the time of the Exodus.[14] One classic way of handling these cases is simply to appeal to the sovereign authority of God. God's commanding an action, however repugnant it may be to our moral feelings or however much in contradiction it may be to our moral practices and norms, ensures the rightness of the act. Thomas seems quite close to this view when he considers Osee's intercourse with the prostitute:

> Fornication is said to be a sin inasmuch as it is contrary to right reason. But man's reason is right inasmuch as it is ruled by the divine will, which is the first and highest rule. Consequently, that which a man does at God's will, obeying his command is not contrary to right reason, although it may seem to be against the common order of right reason -- just as what occurs miraculously by divine power is not contrary to nature even though it be contrary to the common course of nature. Therefore, Abraham did not sin in willing to kill his inno-

> cent son, because he obeyed God, even though this, looked at in itself, is commonly contrary to right human reason. Thus, too, Hosea did not sin by fornicating on divine command. Nor should such intercourse be properly called fornication, although it is termed fornication in reference to the common course of events (S.T. II-II, 154, 2 ad 2).[15]

The last comment is an effort to preserve the principle that fornication is wrong in all cases by treating "fornication" as a moral concept comparable to "murder," rather than as a descriptive concept comparable to "killing." Here it seems that God's command is sufficient to justify an action and to change its moral status.

This passage, however, is at odds with Thomas's argument earlier in the Summa that the moral precepts of the decalogue (which he regards as precepts of both natural law and divine law) do not admit of dispensations. His argument runs on the following lines:

> Now the precepts of the decalogue embody the actual intention of the lawgiver, God. For the precepts of the first table, which direct man to God, embody the order to the general and ultimate good (ad bonum commune et finale), which is God; and those of the second table embody the order of justice to be observed between men, namely that nothing undue (indebitum) be done to anyone, and that to each should be given his due; this, in fact, is how the precepts are to be understood. Therefore they admit of no dispensation whatever (S.T. I-II, 100, 8c).[16]

One way to reconcile these two passages is to rely on the first sentence of the second passage, which can be read as regarding the precepts of the decalogue as expressions of the divine will, and then to maintain that the possibility of dispensation is denied only with regard to human authorities. This, however, will not work, since Thomas's handling of the third objection in this same article shows that he is thinking of divine dispensations as well when he affirms that "the precepts of the decalogue are immutable insofar as they embody justice in its essence (rationem justitiae) (S.T. I-II, 100, 8 ad 3). This shows that for Thomas there is a certain order of reason and justice which even God's will must respect. So, in order to justify the exceptional act performed in the problem cases, Thomas does not appeal simply to God's command as such, but to the specific authority that God has over property, marriage, and the taking of life. Changes from the normal course of law "may be effected by divine authority alone, when it concerns what God alone has instituted, as marriage and the like (S.T. I-II, 100, 8 ad 3). This accords with Thomas's stated view that "the first principles of natural law are altogether unalterable (S.T. I-II, 94, 5c); and it serves to point out the limited content of these first principles. The fundamental necessity at work here is that in all he wills and does God must continue to direct creatures to himself as their last end; for the natural and necessary movement of his will is to his own goodness as the ultimate end (S.T. I, 19, 3c). Even in the problematic cases, where the normal moral order is broken, this orientation to the last end remains. In the words of a recent study by John G. Milhaven: "Where the order to the creature was the natural way by which the thing in question was ordered to its last end and received its goodness, now God gives it goodness directly, by giving it, through his command, a direct ordering to its last end.[17]

Understood in this way, Thomas's position which requires that God direct all things to himself as their last end, is clearly different from the sweeping theological voluntarism of William of

Ockham, in which, as Frederick Olafson observes, "God is subject to no obligations, and any uniformity that may characterize his commands is self-imposed and can be terminated at his pleasure."[18] Since the last end in Thomas's theory is also a personal agent who can give commands, Thomas is able to work in an account of exceptions to natural and divine law, which has a great deal in common with divine command theories of ethics, even while holding that in the normal course of events natural law is "an ordinance of reason for the common good" (S.T. I-II, 90, 4c). Thus his system allows for what can be described in Kierkegaardian terms as a "teleological suspension of the ethical." Thomas himself would be reluctant to use such language since he prefers to deny that the actions performed in these exceptional cases fall under the prohibited moral categories of murder, fornication, and theft, rather than to allow that actions satisfying the normal conditions for inclusion in these categories are, on specific occasions, morally permissible or obligatory.

Thomas's resort to God's commands to resolve the problem of Biblical exceptions to natural law can serve to correct a reading of Thomas as a purely rationalistic moralist, but it also illustrates a basic difficulty in characterizing his moral theory as a whole, which is the diversity of the ways in which he conceives of God as last end. It is clear that in Thomas's general account of human activity teleological factors are of fundamental importance. But the last end is presented both as an object the attainment of which requires a certain ordering or directing of actions and as an independent agent freely allowing or requiring departures from the ordering that would otherwise hold.

Moral Activity and Attaining the Ultimate End

The other fundamental source of difficulty in establishing a coherent interpretation of Thomas's position is that while Thomas often reiterates his views that all human activity is to be directed to the attainment of our final end or happiness, which he identifies with God, and that activity according to natural law and activity according to virtue lead to the attainment of this last end, Thomas leaves unclear the question of the precise way in which morally good or right activity in this life leads or can lead to the attainment of the final end in a life after this one. Normally, when we select means to an end, we have to be concerned with the causal properties of the means; and we must ask whether these are such that the means will in fact bring about the desired end or, at least, whether it is likely to do so. But nothing that we can do here and now, with the possible exception of suicide, seems likely to bring us by virtue of its causal properties to the desired goal. In earthly kitchens there are no utensils for baking pie in the sky. Nor, of course, have Christians claimed that there were, or that human actions by their causal properties alone could bring men into the beatific vision or into the kingdom of God. The gap between human actions in the conditions of this life and the attainment of perfect beatitude also gives rise to another difficulty for the teleological orientation proposed by Thomas: namely, if the means cannot by their causal properties bring about the desired end, then how does intention of the end serve to guide us in our choice of means? If neither moral nor immoral behavior of itself brings about the attainment of complete beatitude, then how is our direction to the end relevant to our adopting or acknowledging moral rules or to our pursuing moral courses of actions?

How, then, can human actions serve as means to the final end? Christians have generally supposed that they do so only indirectly, that is, in some way that is dependent on God's judgment and his just distribution of rewards to the good and punishments to the evil. These are topics that are not explicitly treated in the Summa Theologiae; but in the earlier Summa Contra Gentiles, Thomas observes: "So it is proper to divine providence that evil men be punished and good men rewarded" (Summa Contra Gentiles III, c. 140). He also claims that "it is admitted by all men that man, through works of virtue . . . may attain his ultimate end, which is felicity" (S.C.G. III, 143). I take it to be a safe summary of the centuries of traditional Christian thought on this issue that moral goodness is at least a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for the attainment of eternal beatitude: "Whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother" (1 Jn. 3:10). Jesus says of the last judgment on those who failed to aid those in need: "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Mt. 25:46). Can we then say that morally right action is action which is conducive to the attainment of beatitude? Yes, but this is no longer an informative answer in the way that it is in utilitarianism. In a utilitarian moral theory, actions or classes of actions or traits of character can be shown to be right or morally good if it can be shown that they lead to or bring about the desired end. This requires examination and appraisal of the consequences of the action or rule or trait; and we must be concerned with what the action or rule or trait underconsideration actually brings about or is likely to bring about. In Thomas's theory, on the other hand, the actions themselves do not bring about the end intended but are conducive to it only indirectly, that is through a divine judgment of their moral worth and an exercise of divine power in bestowing appropriate rewards and punishments. So we cannot determine the moral rightness of actions by considering their conduciveness to the last end of man; forthis would be circular. We want some independent way of determining moral rightness, and conduciveness to the end fails to supply this. For a utilitarian, if an action is conducive to the general happiness, then it is morally right; for Thomas, if an action is morally right, then it is conducive to happiness. In Thomas's view, if we desire perfect or complete happiness, then we will have to desire to perform morally right actions, since these are means that are necessary for the end that we wish to attain; but our desire of the end does not tell us what actions are morally right. Rather, the last end, which is also conceived as personal agent and judge, evaluates our actions and passes judgment on agents. But in doing this he is not judging actions in terms of their causal effectiveness in bringing about the attainment of the last end. For he brings this about himself by his providential governance of the world and by giving divine law and the theological virtues that human beings need to attain their supernatural ultimate end.

Thomas then needs another way of determining moral rightness of actions which does not rely on their being means to the last end of man. And in fact we find that when he discusses our moral knowledge and the content of the natural law, he does not rely on considerations drawn from man's direction to the last end of perfect beatitude. We shall have to consider later whether this makes the notion of perfect beatitude irrelevant to Thomas's ethical theory. What we have seen so far should make us prepared to accept the possibility that, despite what Thomas says about the fundamental importance of the last end in our practical reasoning, there may be important aspects of Thomas's ethical theory that are accessible even to those who are unable to share his views about what the last end of man is.

Thus we find that when Thomas comes to expound the precepts of the natural law, he holds the precepts of the natural law are self-evident principles, which function in the field of practical reason in a way parallel to the first principles or axioms of a demonstrative science, as this was conceived by Aristotle (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c).[19] A consequence of this view is that principles of practical reason, which are self-evident (per se nota), cannot depend for their truth on propositions asserting the existence of God or the immortality of the soul or of the human person, since these propositions are not self-evident for Aquinas.(see S.T. I, 2, 1c and I, 75, 6c).

Thomas does not present the first principles of practical reason as conditional imperatives of the following form: If you wish to

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attain perfect beatitude, then do X and avoid Y. There are, we suggest, two fundamental reasons why Thomas does not treat the precepts of natural law or first principles of practical reason as conditional imperatives.

The first is that man's orientation to his last end is not merely optional in the sense that man is free either to pursue it or not, but is also in some sense natural to man, that is, it is an expression of tendencies that are inherent in him as a creature and as an intellectual being.

> The object of the will, that is, the human appetite, is the Good without reserve (universale bonum), just as the object of the mind is the True without reserve. Clearly, then, nothing can satisfy man's will except such goodness, which is found, not in anything created but in God alone (S.T. I-II, 2, 8c).

While man's direction to the vision of God as his last end is natural, it is not inevitable. Thus man is free to pursue the end, to orient his life to it or to turn away from it. If he chooses to perform acts that are not ordered to the supreme good, then his acts are lacking in moral goodness (S.T. I-II, 19, 9c); but a man can freely perform such acts, and thus he fails to take the natural end of man as his own end. Man's breaking with the direction of his life to the contemplation of God as his last end is precisely what for Thomas constitutes serious sin: "Hence, when the soul is so disordered by sin that it turns away from its ultimate goal, God, to whom it is united by charity, then we speak of mortal sin" (S.T. I-II, 72, 5c). In Thomas's view, a human person is not in the position of devising ends for himself on lines suggested by his own conception of his self-interest; rather, he is in the position of acknowledging or of failing to acknowledge that the acitivity of contemplating God is perfectly fulfilling for him and so is naturally in his self-interest. Since the end is not merely optional, it would be seriously misleading to cast the precepts of natural law in the form of conditional imperatives.

In the second place, given what we have already said about the disparity between human actions and the end of perfect beatitude, there arises a problem of how we are to understand the connection between the condition and the imperative. Since the means are inadequate to the end proposed, compliance with the precepts cannot by itself be a sufficient condition for the attainment of the end. Even if compliance is a necessary condition, on what basis does its necessity rest? In what way can such precepts be considered self-evident? It seems that if we pushed for answers to the first question, we might be driven to proposing a teleological form of a divine command theory of ethics. In this teleological form of divine command theory, God does not issue commands which are to be obeyed tout court; but rather he lays down conditions which are not causally necessary for the end proposed but which must be respected if the end is to be attained as the result of his judgment and his bestowal of rewards and punishments. This move would account for the necessity of the means, but would require a negative answer to the question of self-evidence since God's existence and his willing or commanding themselves are not known self-evidently according to Thomas. Also, such

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a move would be at variance with Thomas's view that the goodness of an action is logically prior to its being commanded or forbidden by God (see S.C.G. III, 129).

Natural Law and Intuitionism

How, then, does Thomas regard the precepts of the natural law if he does not take them to be conditional imperatives? In his discussion of the natural law (S.T. I-II, 94), Thomas presents these precepts in two rather different ways. In what I will call the first pattern of presentation, he says that, since they are first principles of practical reason, the precepts of the natural law are, alike the axioms of a demonstrative science, per se nota or self-evident. They are parallel to the principles of theoretical knowledge and are not derived from them -- a point that should make us wary of regarding Thomas as an ethical naturalist or a violator of Hume's Law. The precepts of natural law are known to all men (S.T. I-II, 94, 4c); even though men may, in particular cases, fail to act on them, they cannot be erased from the human heart (S.T. I-II, 94, 6c). From them more specific conclusions are drawn as to what men ought to do; these derivative or secondary precepts are not recognized by all men, though they hold good for all men (S.T. I-II, 94, 4c). But the cognitive status enjoyed by these primary and secondary precepts does not guarantee the truth of our judgments of what we ought to do in particular cases (S.T. I-II, 94, 4c). Conscience for Thomas is binding; but it is not infallible (S.T. I-II, 19, 5c). The first principles of practical reason are known through synderesis, a habit of moral knowledge which operates with regard to the principles of practical reason in the same way as understanding or intuition does, for Aristotle, with regard to the principles of theoretical reason (S.T. I, 79, 12c).

Most of this, we can say, sounds like good intuitionist doctrine. But what, we may ask, are the things that we know through this intuitive grasp of first principles? Here Thomas is not very helpful. There are several candidates proposed in this section of the Summa, but Thomas nowhere offers a systematic discussion of just what the primary precepts of natural law are and of how they are related to each other. But we can at least collect together some of the precepts that he proposes. The first is the most discussed and is set forth in S.T. I-II, 94, 2c, in such a way that it is clear that it is the most fundamental of all practical precepts: "Good is to be sought and done, evil to be avoided." This has been dismissed as an empty and uninformative tautology, e.g., by Felix Oppenheim.[20] It is interpreted by Eric D'Arcy[21] as the practical parallel to the principle of non-contradiction in our theoretical knowledge; both principles have a foundational role in their respective realms of discourse, but from neither can we gain substantive conclusions. Thomas does, however, propose certain other first principles of practical reason that we should consider. Thus he speaks of the precept that "we should act intelligently (ut secundum rationem agatur)" in ways which make it clear that this is a first principle of practical reason; for it is accepted by all men and from it he holds that we can derive more specific conclusions (S.T. I-II, 94, 4c). He also says that this precept is equivalent to the precept that we should act virtuously (ut secundum virtutem agatur) (S.T. I-II, 94, 3c). Here again we are confronted with the problem of content: granted that we should act according to reason, how does this enable us to determine what reason requires? If we start from the major premise: "We should do what reason requires," then our problem is simply shifted to the minor: "Reason requires that we should do X," since what we want to know is how it is to be shown that reason requires that we do X. Thus, when Thomas says that from the principle that we should act according to reason, it follows as a specific conclusion that "goods held in trust are to be restored to their owners " (S.T. I-II, 94, 4c), it is not clear just how this is so. All that we have here is a rather unsatisfactory example of the relationship that Thomas claims to exist between primary and secondary precepts of the natural law. For here, at least, Thomas fails to advert to the problem of determining what reason requires.

There are other important principles that Thomas proposes as primary precepts of the natural law. In his discussion of the divine law, Thomas considers the precepts of the Decalogue, which, he says, are precepts "of which man has knowledge through himself from God" (S.T. I-II, 100, 3c). The Ten Commandments are, then, secondary precepts of the natural law, since all the moral precepts of the Old Law belong to the natural law (S.T. I-II, 100, 1c). The Decalogue does not include either the "first common precepts," which are self-evident and from which the precepts of the Decalogue are themselves derived, or the further conclusions which "are found, on careful examination on the part of wise men, to be in accord with reason" (S.T. I-II, 100, 3c). He cites as an example of a first principle the precept that "man ought not to do evil to anyone"; and then in reply to an objection that the commandments of love of God and of neighbor (Mt. 22:37) are also "first common recepts of the law of nature" and are "self-evident to human reason whether through reason or through faith." They are principles from which the precepts of the Decalogue are derived as conclusions (S.T. I-II, 100, 3 ad 1). Even though these principles are not tautologies, here too the problem of content recurs since we are not told how to determine what love requires. Also we are left in the dark as to the relations (if any) between the commands of love and the previously mentioned first principles. Thomas's inventory of the primary precepts of the natural law remains inconclusive and unsatisfactory.

The failure of Thomas to give a systematic exposition of primary and secondary precepts leaves us in a situation of considerable perplexity as to just what he means to say in this area. But the following comments can safely be made. First, it is clear that he is not seriously interested in exhibiting morality as an axiomatic system. This goes against a way of speaking that Thomas commonly uses himself and that has been taken up by many of his followers. As Copleston admits: "Aquinas talks as though people derive or deduce less general from more general precepts and then proceed to apply these precepts to particular actions."[22] But his failure to give a careful formulation of the axioms of the system and to elucidate the process by which we are to derive conclusions shows that his use of the parallel between practical reasoning and the Aristotelian account of demonstrative science **is simply an analogy,** the implications and limits of which he does not develop with his customary precision. We should then be wary of resting a major part of either defense or criticism of Thomas on this analogy. Second, the distinction that Thomas introduces between precepts that immediately follow from first principles and those that require further investigation by the wise (S.T. I-II, 100, 3c; see S.T. I-II, 94, 4c), or between secondary and tertiary precepts ot the natural law is, of course, not a happy distinction in an axiomatic system, where the status of theorems or conclusions does not vary in any interesting or important way with the number of steps required to reach them. The logical analogy does not help us much at all in interpreting this distinction, which is basically psychological.

There are, however, two points that Thomas makes that will be of some help to us in interpreting his distinction among primary, secondary, and tertiary precepts of the natural law. The first of these is the difference between principles that admit of exceptions and those that do not. Thomas claims that "the first principles of natural law are altogether unalterable" (S.T. I-II, 94, 5c). I think that when we consider the candidates proposed by Thomas as primary precepts and mentioned by us earlier, this claim is at least plausible and, in the case of most of them, is actually true. (We may think there are exceptions to the principles that a man ought never to do harm to anyone; but, if there are to be any exceptionless moral principles, then most of the principles mentioned by Thomas are promising candidates.) The secondary precepts admit of exceptions only on "some particular and rare occasions" (S.T. I-II, 94, 5c). However, in discussing the secondary precept that "goods held in trust are to be returned to their owners", Thomas takes a line that is both more permissive and more sceptical than we might expect:

> This is true in the majority of cases, yet a case can crop up when to return the deposit would be injurious, and consequently unreasonable, as for instance were it to be required in order to attack one's country. The more you descend into the detail the more it appears how the general rule admits of exceptions, so that you have to hedge it with cautions and qualifications. The greater the number of conditions accumulated the greater the number of ways in which the principle is seen to fall short, so that all by itself it cannot tell you whether it be right to return a deposit or not (S.T. I-II, 94, 4c).

Of course, this reminds us that for Thomas conscience is not infallible, and that he is cognizant of the difficulties invoved in any effort to apply laws or rules to human affairs in all their variety and complexity.

There is a second factor that is at work in Thomas's distinction between secondary and tertiary precepts that we should also advert to. It is the difference between those moral principles that we can and do expect ordinary people to agree to with

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a minimum of reflection and those less obvious and more controversial principles that have to be established by arguments. This is not exactly the distinction that Thomas himself makes, since he admits that people will, in some cases, fail to know the secondary precepts; for instance, Caesar reports that the Germans did not consider robbery to be wicked (S.T. I-II, 94, 4c). (We should also note that the more controversial precepts need not be more general than the more obvious ones.) But it comes close to what he has in mind when he **distinguishes** secondary and tertiary precepts. If we accept these two moves in interpreting Thomas's distinction of precepts, then we have the possibility open to us of holding that tertiary precepts are or can be logically dependent on the secondary ones, while the precise relationship between the primary and secondary precepts remains unclear. If the secondary precepts are not derivable from the primary precepts (and I do not see how they can be), then in one sense they become themselves first principles of practical reason and thus primary precepts. In that case, they would then be known by the same intuitive grasp of first principles as the original primary precepts. However, they would still remain open to exceptions; and they would differ from the original primary precepts in being specific moral rules. In this interpretation we might take the claim of their dependence on the original primary precepts as the claim that these are the principles that a person who accepted one or more of the original primary precepts would see to be true or would accept if he were thinking clearly. I am aware that in much of this I am departing somewhat from the thought of St. Thomas himself, but I would maintain that this departure is both necessary and justified as a way of escaping from the misleading implications of the deductivist model that Thomas uses in expounding the precepts of natural law.

There is, as we mentioned earlier, another way in which Thomas speaks about our coming to establish precepts of the natural law, and to this we must now turn. In the crucial article on the precepts of the natural law, Thomas, after laying down the fundamental principles of practical reason, then makes the further claim that "reason of its nature apprehends the things towards which man has a natural tendency as good objectives and therefore to be actively pursued" (S.T. I-II, 94, 2c). He then observes that "the order in which commands of the law of nature are ranged corresponds to that of our natural tendencies." He then distinguishes three levels of natural inclinations in man: 1) the natural inclination that man has as a substance to self-preservation, 2) the natural inclinations to sexual union and to the rearing of children that man has as an animal, 3) the natural inclinations to know the truth about God and to live in a society that man has as a rational being. Now Thomas seems to be proposing a way of deriving precepts of natural law from natural inclinations; certainly some of his disciples have taken him to be doing this.[23]

About such a move several comments have to be made. First, until we know how much evaluative content is built into the notion of "natural inclination," we must be careful of accusing Thomas of trying to derive "oughts" from "ises". Second, we should note the vagueness of the whole procedure. Thus, while Thomas gives us some examples of the natural inclinations he has in mind, he does not present us with a complete enumeration of natural inclinations; for, in the following article, he introduces a further natural inclination to act according to reason as well as an inclination to act according to virtue (S.T. I-II, 94, 3c). Thomas does not tell us just what precepts of the natural law he is attempting to establish on the basis of natural inclinations; and his silence here makes it very difficult to determine just what he takes to be the relation between natural inclinations and precepts of natural law. Nothing more definite is clearly asserted than a general correspondence between natural inclinations and precepts of natural law. Third, we should note that no effort is made to integrate the proposed move from natural inclinations to precepts of natural law with what is said elsewhere in this question about the derivation of precepts from first principles of practical reason. Perhaps these can be integrated in one scheme, but Thomas himself gives us very little help in this project. Fourth, in this article a number of different things are proposed as good and therefore to be pursued. No effort is made to reduce them to the status of means to the last end. Fifth, a positive suggestion as to how we might interpret this important article of the Summa. I propose that we take it, not as a way of deriving precepts of natural law from natural inclinations, but as a way of indicating the scope of the precepts of natural law (they apply to and regulate our pursuit of the goods which are objects of our natural inclinations: see S.T. I-II, 94, 2 ad 2), and the order of the precepts (they rest on the common foundation of the principles that good is to be pursued and done, and evil is to be avoided; and they can be classified on the same lines that are used in classifying natural inclinations).

The interpretative move that I have been arguing for really amounts to a recommendation that we regard Thomas's ethical theory as a kind of deontological intuitionism, despite the teleological and naturalistic language in which parts of it are expressed. In this interpretation, the secondary precepts of the natural law are regarded as known by intuition and not as derived from prior premises. The secondary precepts include such things as the Decalogue and the obligations to return goods on deposit and to keep promises.

The Relevance of the Ultimate End to Moral Activity

It was argued earlier that the conduciveness of actions to perfect beatitude was not a satisfactory basis for determining moral rightness and that Thomas needed another way of determining what the precepts of the natural law are, even if one grants him that morally good action is a necessary condition for the attainment of man's last end. Should we then conclude that Thomas's notion of perfect beatitude is simply irrelevant to his ethical theory?

There is one way in which Thomas could make his views on perfect beatitude relevant to the moral life which so far as I can see, he does not use; and that is by appealing to perfect beatitude as a motive for moral behavior. Thomas does not seem to be interested in the ancient and modern question, why be moral? and so he does not devote his attention to supplying motives for moral behavior. His concern with natural inclinations could readily be worked into a motivating appeal to self-love and to man's desire not to have natural inclinations frustrated; and he certainly believes that men are motivated to seek their own happiness. But the question, why be moral?, would probably have struck him as a sign of either dangerous flippancy or a lack of uprightness.

But it is clear from what he says about the necessity of ordering one's will to God as the supreme good and last end of the human will (S.T. I-II, 19, 9c), that he expects that the intention of the last end will somehow be a guiding and unifying thread in the life of the human agent as he pursues the various goods of this life. It is clear also from his general account of human activity that he regards the perfection of the agent's life as consisting in the attainment of good, both moral and non-moral, and not simply in obedience and conformity to law. But the most important and fundamental connection between the life of the human agent here and now and the state of perfect beatitude is not the relation of means and end but relations of resemblance and participation. Here we must rely for guidance on Thomas's notion of imperfect or incomplete beatitude. "There are two stages in happiness, complete and incomplete. In the first the true meaning of happiness in the fullest sense is realized, in the second happiness is shared in by some particular likeness" (S.T. I-II, 3, 6c). Though imperfect happiness is not the final end of man and so does not occupy the central place in Thomas's theory accorded to the notion of perfect beatitude, he grants that "by nature we desire not only perfect happiness, but every likeness or snatch of it" (S.T. I-II, 3, 6 ad 2). The difference between the two forms of beatitude is succinctly put by Thomas:

> Therefore man's last and perfect beatitude, which he expects in the life to come, is wholly centered on contemplation. As for the imperfect beatitude we can have at present, it is primarily and chiefly centered on contemplation, secondarily on the activity of the practical intelligence governing our deeds and feelings, as stated in the Ethics (S.T. I-II, 3, 5c).

In all these states, of course, for Thomas as for Aristotle, happiness is to be understood as activity in accordance with virtue. The acquisition of imperfect beatitude in this life is gradual and progressive:

> For then [in the state of perfect beatitude] by a single, uninterrupted, and continuous act our minds will be united with God. In the meantime, in so far as we fall short of that lasting unity, so far do we fall short of perfect bliss. All the same we can readily have some share in it, and so much the greater as our activity grows more single-minded and less distracted. Hence the active life, which is occupied with many things, has less of the nature of happiness than the contemplative life, which revolves round one thing, the gazing at truth (S.T. I-II, 3, 2 ad 4).

Now, whether or not we accept Thomas's conclusions here, we can certainly see how a person might organize his activities in accordance with the pattern of life that Thomas recommends here, a pattern of life which would aim at realizing to the greatest extent possible in this life the goods involved in both moral activity and contemplation. We can also see that ranking the goods achieved by contemplation and by moral activity above all other goods is a plausible and consistent view to take, though we may have doubts as to whether these goods can be shown to constitute the unique end for all human beings. We can also see that one might argue for the superior value of these goods precisely because of their resemblance to the supreme good, the vision of God. We can also see that there are means available to us for the achievement of these goods, even though these means are not themselves directly conducive to the attainment of perfect beatitude. We also notice the common thread of the activity of the intellect, which for Thomas is one faculty, in all three phases of beatitude: reason regulating and directing our activities and feelings in the active life and reason contemplating truth and God in both imperfect and perfect beatitude; and so we can see that all three states involve different ways of exercising the same human power. But the relations of similarity and participation obtaining between imperfect beatitude, both active and contemplative, and perfect beatitude do not lead us in the direction of taking moral goodness simply as a means to the end, which is perfect beatitude, unless we are bewitched by Aristotelian dicta about the teleological character of practical reason. Rather, they prompt us to hold that moral goodness is an irreducible part of human beatitude, that moral actions are not to be construed as means to an end which lies outside them, and that moral rules are not to be derived from consideration of man's last end. In effect, perfect beatitude serves as an ideal, in the light of which we evaluate various kinds of fulfilling activity and to which we aspire, rather than as an end to which we choose causally conducive means.

Accepting such a reading of Thomas would leave us in a position from which we could understand how it has been possible for Aquinas to be characterized as a religious mystic and as a rationalistic proponent of natural law, as a consequentialist and as a defender of absolute and exceptionless moral norms. It would also leave friendly critics of Thomas free both to affirm the relevance to morality of the human person's movement to God and to assess the specific claims that Thomas advances about moral laws, virtues, and actions and to criticize them on their merits as norms for the common moral life of humanity.

We can also affirm that Thomas attempts a complex integration of views from ethical and religious traditions, an integration which resists easy categorization in contemporary terms but which is also open to fundamental criticism.

Footnotes to Chapter VI

[1] Hans Reiner, "Wesen und Grund der sittlichen Verbindlichkeit (Obligatio) bei Thomas von Aquin," in Sein und Ethos, Walberberger Studien, I (Mainz: Matthias Grunewald Verlag), pp. 244-245.

[2] Ibid., p. 247.

[3] See H. L. A. Hart, The Concept of Law (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1961), pp. 189-195.

[4] For an introductory discussion of these forms of utilitarianism, see William K. Frankena, Ethics, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), pp. 34-43, 64.

[5] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics X. 8. 1178b8-23.

[6] Ibid., II. 1. 1103b14-26.

[7] St. Augustine, De Civitate Dei, V. 19.

[8] W. D. Hughes, in a footnote ad loc. in the Blackfriars edition, says of this definition of virtue: "The definition collated from the works of St. Augustine and customarily attributed to him is probably due to Peter of Poitiers in his Sentences II. 1. PL211,1041."

[9] Prosper of Aquitaine, Liber sententiarum ex operibus S. Augustini delibatarum 106.

[10] St. Augustine, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae I. 15.

[11] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics X. 8. 1178a8-21.

[12] Ibid., V. 5. 1140b4-6. For a discussion of this point in Aristotle, see J. Donald Monan, Moral Knowledge and Its Methodology in Aristotle (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 61-64.

[13] For a critical discussion of divine command theories of ethcs as metaethical theories, see Richard B. Brandt, Ethical Theory (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959), pp.

[14] For a careful consideration of Thomas's treatment of these cases in texts from different periods of his career, see John G. Mil-

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haven, "Moral Absolutes and Thomas Aquinas, in Absolutes in Moral Theology, ed. Charles E. Curran (Washington: Corpus, 1968), pp. 154-185.

[15] Milhaven's translation.

[16] Milhaven's translation.

[17] Milhaven, p. 163.

[18] Frederick Olafson, Principles and Persons (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), p. 24.

[19] Aristotle, Posterior Analytics, I. 1-2.

[20] Felix Oppenheim, Moral Principles in Political Philosophy (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 76.

[21] Eric D'Arcy, Conscience and Its Right to Freedom (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1961), pp. 53-55.

[22] Frederick J. Copleston, S.J., Aquinas (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1955), p. 220.

[23] Armand Maurer, Medieval Philosophy (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 188.

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